

HEAD START[®] BULLETIN

enhancing head start communication



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ★ Administration for Children and Families ★ Administration on Children, Youth and Families

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Family Involvement in Head Start

by Frankie Hoover Gibson, Parent Involvement Program Specialist, Head Start Bureau



Gabrielle, Phil, Frances, and Brett—a Head Start/Early Head Start Family (Rosemount Center, DC)

As I was walking down the street recently, a mother with her teenage daughter saw my Head Start bag and called out, "Is that the same Head Start my daughter went to fifteen years ago?" When I nodded yes, she said, "We had very little going for us then, and Head Start came along—it was one of the best things that ever happened to us." Over and over during the past 35 years, Head Start has given children and families the message that they are valued, worthy, and capable. With increasingly complex demands, is your program welcoming families and reinforcing the importance of their involvement? Are current and former Head Start parents involved in welcoming new parents? Does staff have adequate ongoing training and support to effectively reach every family directly?

Head Start, a comprehensive child development program, always operates within the context of the child's family and his or her community.

The Head Start Program Performance Standards emphasize the need for ongoing

attention to creating an environment that is receptive to each family throughout its program experience. This family partnership agreement process is individualized, strengths based, family driven, and staff supported. Each family determines the direction of its partnership and works with Head Start staff to achieve identified goals.

This issue of the Bulletin focuses on some of the many ways parents participate in Head Start—from the shared decision-making opportunities in Parent Committees and the Policy Council/Committee, to receiving training, and to providing support to children in the learning process.

Father/male involvement in Head Start is highlighted. President Clinton has made the Fatherhood Initiative, which cuts across all governmental agencies, a priority of his Administration. Suggestions for enhancing male participation in your own programs are included.

In addition, there is a special section on research featuring the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) and the Early Head Start Research Project. An overview of each study is provided, along with preliminary findings.

Finally, brief descriptions of selected Head Start publications and other resources are included for your review.

We also encourage you to share with us celebrations, traditions, events, one-on-one activities, and other opportunities you create to help families feel welcome in your program!

Inside this Issue...

Strengthening Families	11
Fathers: The Forgotten Parent	12
FACES and EHS Research Updates	18

Contents

Family Involvement in Head Start	1
Patricia Montoya Appointed Commissioner for ACYF	3
Q&A on Program Governance	4
“Growing” Healthy Children: The Family Wellness Approach	6
Parents as Paraprofessional Staff	8
Head Start and the Fatherhood Initiative	9
Father Involvement in Head Start	10
Strengthening Families	11
The Forgotten Parent	12
The Dad Show	13
Head Start Stories Lisa Sullivan Joy Baldrige Frank Olguin	14
Child Support Enforcement, Child Care, and Head Start Collaboration Grants Awarded	17
Linking Head Start Quality to Child Outcomes: The FACES Study	18
Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project	20
1998–99 National Head Start Fellows	23
Resources	24

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The Bulletin is a service of HSB’s Training and Technical Assistance Branch. Its purpose is to enhance communication among the Head Start Bureau, Head Start programs, and interested national, regional, and state organizations and agencies.

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Head Start Bulletin
F A M I L Y I N V O L V E M E N T
Issue No. 65

Frankie Hoover Gibson was the HSB lead for this issue.

Patricia Montoya Appointed Commissioner for Children, Youth, and Families

On November 30, 1998, Patricia Montoya was sworn in as the Commissioner of the Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) at the Department of Health and Human Services. As Commissioner, Ms. Montoya oversees the implementation of federal programs assisting vulnerable children and youth. ACYF program areas include Head Start, the Child Care Bureau, the Family and Youth Services Bureau, and the Children's Bureau (which houses the Office of Child Abuse and Neglect). Ms. Montoya also serves as spokesperson for the Administration on issues related to child and youth development, early childhood education, child protective services, foster care, adoption, and the challenges and opportunities facing children, youth and families.

Before assuming the leadership of ACYF, Patricia Montoya was the Director of Region VI for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

A registered nurse, Ms. Montoya has extensive experience in children's health, social services, and family needs. Throughout her career, she has worked to improve outcomes for children and families through her work in pediatrics, school health, community outreach, and health policy. From 1993 to 1994 she served as practice manager of Presbyterian Family Healthcare, a primary care/urgent care center in Albuquerque. From 1989 to 1993, Ms. Montoya was the executive director of New Mexico Health Resources, a non-profit organization that recruits health care professionals for work in rural areas of the state. She also served as the assistant director of the American Nurses Association in Washington, D.C., from 1987 to 1989.

Long active in Hispanic community and political activities, Ms. Montoya is a member of the National Hispanic Nurses Association; the American Nurses Association; and Sigma Theta Tau, the National Honor Society of



Nursing. Other groups she has worked with include: the National Advisory Council on Nursing Education and Practice; the White House Health Professional Review Group on Health Care Reform; the New Mexico Health Policy Commission, Geographic Access Committee on Health Manpower; the Board of Directors of Family/Child Services; and Healthcare for the Homeless.

HHS Secretary Donna Shalala praised Ms. Montoya's previous work with children and families in the community. "With her experience," Secretary Shalala noted, "Ms. Montoya brings to HHS a unique understanding and valuable perspective of what children and families need and the daily challenges they face."

Program Governance

Program Governance is section 1304.50 of the Head Start Program Performance Standards. Opportunities for parents to be involved in shared decision-making activities with the governing body and staff include elected participation on the Policy Council or Policy Committee. In addition, every parent who has a child enrolled in Head Start is automatically a member of the Parent Committee. The following are answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about shared decision making in Head Start.

Q. Where is 70.2 in the Program Performance Standards?

A. In the revised Program Performance Standards, all elements of 70.2 are in Subpart D—Program Design and Management, section 1304.50, Program Governance.

Q. What individual or group determines the composition of the Policy Council/Committee and the method of selecting representatives of the community?

A. Section 1304.50 (a) of the Program Performance Standards gives the grantee/delegate agency the responsibility of establishing the composition of the Policy Council/Committee and the methods to be used in selecting representatives of the community. The policy group in an existing agency, and the interim group in a new grantee/delegate agency, must approve the procedure.

Q. Can a grantee or delegate agency place representatives of the community, including agency governing body members, on Head Start policy groups without approval of elected parent members of the group?

A. No. [See 1304.50(b)(1)]

Q. Who has the responsibility for training the Policy Council/Committee?

A. On-going training is the responsibility of the grantee/delegate agency. [See 1304.52(k)(4)]

Q. How long after the beginning of the operational year does a grantee/delegate agency have to establish a Policy Council/Committee?

A. All policy groups and Parent Committees must be established as early in the program year as possible. This allows the policy group parents enough time to receive the full benefit of training and experi-

ence in the shared decision-making process. [See 1304.50(a)(3)]

Q. If an agency is both a Head Start grantee and delegate, or has more than one Head Start program, how is its policy group structured?

A. Every grantee has a Policy Council and every delegate agency has a Policy Committee. If an agency is both a Head Start grantee and delegate, there is only one policy group, a Policy Council, which also conducts some delegate-related business. [See 1304.50(a)(l)(i)(ii)]

Q. Can Head Start parents who are also staff serve on policy groups as voters?

A. In order to avoid any conflicts of interest, no staff member (or members of his or her immediate family) of the grantee/delegate agency can serve in that capacity. However, parents who occasionally act as substitutes may serve. [See 1304.50(b)(6)]

Q. Who should be involved in the policy group?

A. A minimum of 51 percent of the Council/Committee are parents of children enrolled in Head Start at the time of their election. The remaining members include local community representatives who are recommended by the grantee or delegate agency and approved by the policy group parents. [See 1304.50(b)(2)(3)]

Q. What is the limitation on the term of membership on a Head Start Policy Council/Committee, and why are there limits?

A. In accordance with 1304.50(b)(4)(5), terms of membership for parents and other community representatives are limited to a maximum of three one-year terms. Terms are limited to ensure that greater numbers

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New Training Guide on: *Setting the Stage for Program Governance*

of parents have access to the decision-making experience and that new ideas and community representatives are available to the program.

Q. Can low-income members be reimbursed for travel, meals and child care expenses that arise because of Council responsibilities?

A. Yes. [See 1304.50(f)]

Q. Can a policy group delegate its responsibility to approve or disapprove the hiring or termination of Head Start staff, including the Head Start director, to one of its own committees or to any other body of individuals?

A. No. The policy group may use a subcommittee to gather information to make recommendations to the full policy group, but the responsibility to approve or disapprove the hiring or termination of Head Start staff must remain with the full policy group. [See 1304.50(d)(l)(x)(xi)]

Q. What is a new grantee/delegate agency's role in hiring staff?

A. A new delegate agency initially has no official policy group, but is expected to organize and activate a policy group within two months from the receipt of the grant. Therefore, the grantee/delegate agency organizes an interim group made up of potential Head Start parents and community group members. This group is involved in program planning and must approve or disapprove the hiring of staff.

Q. Can grandparents of a Head Start child serve on policy groups if they are not the child's legal guardians?

A. Yes, they can serve if they are the primary care givers or surrogate parents of the enrolled children. This can include anyone else who is

not the biological parent of an enrolled child. [See 1306.3(h)]

Q. How should parents be included in the planning process of the local Head Start program?

A. The involvement of policy group parents in the planning process of the Head Start program includes, but is not limited to, encouraging parents to be involved in the development of the grant application and all other program plans to be used in implementation of goals. [See 1304.50(d)(e) and Appendix A] Parent Committees can also play an important role in providing opportunities for all parents to be a vital part of these functions.

Q. What is an impasse?

A. An impasse is a deadlock that occurs when a grantee or delegate agency and its policy group cannot reach agreement on a proposed action. Such impasses should be resolved at the local level to avoid disruption of services to Head Start children and families. In addition, Head Start agencies should have written internal dispute resolution procedures to resolve governing body/policy group conflicts. [See 1304.50(h)]

Q. Can parents be required to participate or volunteer in Head Start?

A. No. But staff can encourage parents to do so by focusing on the benefits to their children and family, as well as to the program. The home-based option expects parent participation. [1304.40(d)(2)]

If you have additional questions about parent involvement in program governance, contact Frankie Gibson at the Head Start Bureau, T: 202-205-8399, or by e-mail at fgibson@acfdhhs.gov.

“Growing” Healthy Children: The Family Wellness Approach

By Sally Mead

The healthy growth and development of children is one of Head Start’s primary goals. To achieve that goal, Prevention Associates in Alaska has developed the Family Wellness Approach. The model is the outcome of a four-year demonstration project focusing on family wellness and mental health.

The Family Wellness Approach is a comprehensive family development effort built on a resiliency model. It is based on the belief that children and families are able to face life’s challenges more successfully if their inherent strengths are identified and developed. Strengths are “protective factors” that can be developed to offset the challenges of “risk factors.” This view is consistent with Head Start’s strengths-based orientation and belief in family and community empowerment.

There are four main steps to the Family Wellness Approach, all based on building relationships with parents:

- (1) Assessing the child’s strengths and challenges
- (2) Assessing the family’s strengths and challenges
- (3) Putting this information together into a Family Wellness Plan
- (4) Designing strategies that are parent driven, and supporting their implementation.

These steps are carried out by a trained Family Advocate, who works with the family and other Head Start staff.

Step One: Child Assessment

The first step is to develop a complete picture of a child’s mental, emotional, and physical well-being in both the classroom and home settings. This assessment process identifies the strengths and unique characteristics of the child that can be supported and further encouraged. It also allows parents, teachers, and other staff to identify potential

risks in the child’s environment or behaviors and address them early.

Step Two: Family Assessment

Fundamental to any child’s well-being is the well-being of his or her family. The Family Wellness Approach identifies the unique strengths and stressors of the family, as well as the child, primarily through a kinship map and interactive interview.

Step Three: Family Wellness Plan

This step involves taking all of the information gathered in the previous steps—the strengths and stressors of the child, the family, and the community—and beginning to develop strategies to address them. The Family Wellness Plan is a roadmap for promoting individual and family strengths and successfully addressing environmental stressors.



*Zilma Gologergen and her daughter
Stephanie (Gambell, AK)*



Step Four: Implementation of Strategies

Once the Family Wellness Plan has been mapped out, the parents control the pace and focus of its implementation. The Family Wellness Advocate coordinates efforts on the home front with the teacher's efforts in the classroom. The advocate also connects family members with other services to help them implement the strategies they've designed in their Family Wellness Plan.

Unique Tools of the Family Wellness Approach

The Family Wellness Approach makes use of two unique tools:

- **The Kinship Map** helps families to recognize their existing support network and think of ways to expand it. The Advocate works with the family to create a picture of its extended family and friends. This Kinship Map highlights people in the parents' lives who provide emotional support and those who provide extra care for the Head Start child. It helps families appreciate the support system they have, and many times parents realize it is stronger than they imagined.

- **The Family Wellness Plan** is a user-friendly, five-page form that helps families identify all the protective and risk factors of the family and child. Once families identify specific strengths and challenges they face, they begin to develop strategies to overcome them. The goal of the Plan is to help families discover ways to reduce or eliminate risk factors, and to highlight and build up protective factors. The Plan should also be used with the child in the classroom and incorporated into daily planning.



photos by Willa Siegel

The Family Wellness Approach offers a way to help families expand their natural child-raising skills, and shifts the focus of human service providers from crisis management to prevention and family development. It is one more tool to help our children grow to be successful, healthy, and most of all, happy adults.

For more information, contact Sally Mead, Project Director of the Region X QIC's Alaska Satellite Support Center, at T: 907-272-6925; F: 907-272-6946; E: Smead@alaska.net.

Parents as Paraprofessional Staff

By Marie Brand

Over the past 34 years, more and more parents have been getting involved with Head Start as paid staff members. Hiring current or former Head Start parents from the community has many benefits. It allows programs to be more culturally responsive and to meet the needs of families in their local area. A select group of parents with specialized training may be especially helpful in working with children with disabilities. These parents have knowledge to share with the classroom staff, as well as the potential to support other parents as they learn to respond to their child's special needs.



photo by Denise Simpson

Vonita Murray with three children at the Rosemont Early Head Start Center in Washington, D.C.

The Early Head Start program at The Educational Alliance in New York City has established a program for parents hired as center staff where they are trained as paraprofessionals. The process is as follows.

First, interested Head Start parents submit resumes and participate in a series of interviews before being accepted as caregiver trainees for the Early Head Start program. Next, these parents receive six hours of intensive pre-service training on site and in a variety of infant/toddler programs. Finally,

they spend one year studying and working as primary caregivers in the Early Head Start classroom. Parents also receive weekly reflective supervision and are compensated with a small stipend. Parents who need to complete high school attend agency-based GED classes.

Whatever the background of a parent hired as a paraprofessional, her/his role should be clearly defined, including job responsibilities and supervision. Regular training should be provided to address issues related to job skills and confidentiality.

This model has proven to be a cost-effective strategy for providing high-quality child care in the community and supporting staff in being culturally compatible with the children. Perhaps most importantly, the program supports community development.

An extra benefit of this arrangement is that qualified parents can fulfill the work requirements of welfare reform through employment as child care paraprofessionals. The internship has been accredited for the NYC Welfare to Work requirement. At graduation, each intern can become a licensed family day care provider or is helped to secure a position in the child care field. Of the first class of parents completing The Educational Alliance's training program, 80 percent are currently employed in full-time child care positions.

Parents are the most valuable resource available to Head Start programs. Through ongoing training, supervision, feedback, and support, they can become successful additions to Head Start and child care program staff.

Marie Brand is Infant/Toddler Specialist at the Region II Disabilities Center for Quality Improvement, T:212-998-5528; F: 212-995-4562; E: mb25@157.nyu.edu

Head Start and the Fatherhood Initiative

In June 1995, the Clinton Administration launched a government-wide initiative to strengthen the role of fathers in families. The President recognizes that strong families are essential to the future of the nation, and that both mothers and fathers play an essential role in ensuring the well-being of their children. The President also recognizes that changes in the lives of fathers must be supported by the communities in which they live, and that communities must know what resources and support are available to help in this effort. All federal agencies were asked to review their policies and programs and strengthen their support of fathers.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) responded to the President's request by expanding and enhancing current efforts in support of fathers, and by developing new initiatives. The Administration for Children and Families has made significant efforts on behalf of fathers.

Head Start Bureau Plans

Parent involvement has always been an essential part of Head Start, and fathers are encouraged to participate in all aspects of the program. In addition, the Head Start Bureau funded six male involvement demonstration projects between 1991 and 1994, and several Regional Offices continue to support specific male involvement efforts. The Bureau has published a number of parent involvement resources, including the *Head Start Handbook of the Parent Involvement Vision and Strategies*, which outlines how mothers and fathers can play critical roles in their children's education. Other innovative steps have been taken to collaborate with related federal programs, fraternities, and other state and local groups to encourage fathers to volunteer and to play an active role in children's lives. The Head Start Bureau is also exploring ways to support local Head Start fatherhood efforts. A workgroup is collecting information on current fatherhood activities across the coun-

try. Best practices will be identified, along with additional resources that might be helpful to local programs. These resources will be developed and disseminated as part of an overall strategy to enhance father/male involvement in Head Start.

The Head Start Bureau welcomes your contributions to these efforts. Information and materials on father involvement initiatives in your program may be sent to: Father Involvement Initiative, HSPMC, 1025 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 1025, Washington, DC 20005, or send by fax to 703-683-5769.



photo by Maria Ellen Huebner, courtesy of the Child Upfront Program, Goodwill Industries, Racine, WI

Father Involvement in Head Start

By Wendell Campbell and James Miller

When Thinking About Father Involvement, Ask . . .

- Do you have programs specifically aimed at fathers?
- Do you have staff in-service programs improving the quality of service delivery to fathers/males?
- Do you actively recruit and employ male staff members and volunteers?
- Do you make it clear that the father or other male figures are important and necessary in the delivery of services to the child and family?
- When you telephone a family at home to discuss the child, do you talk with the father as well as the mother?
- If the mother is the custodial parent, do you also mail all materials regarding the child to the father (if approved and legally appropriate)?
- Do you flexibly schedule meetings at hours conducive to male/father attendance, and allow enough planning time so that fathers can arrange their schedules for the meeting?
- Do your newsletters and printed materials reflect the valuable concerns and roles men play in the lives of their children; do your printed materials and hallways have pictures of men actively engaged with their children?

Head Start's underlying mission is to do what's best for children. And research has consistently shown that what's best for children is the involvement of both parents.

Father involvement is significantly related to children's school success—even after accounting for mother involvement.¹ Research also shows that supportive interactions with an engaged father or father-figure can benefit children both intellectually and socially, even if the father does not live with the child.²

On a more basic level, children need to feel loved and cherished by their parents. A child who has the involvement of both father and mother has twice the love, twice the supervision, and twice the support.

What Can Head Start Do?

Head Start should take the lead in recognizing the importance of fathers in the development of infants, toddlers, and young children. Parent involvement is a hallmark of the Head Start program, and we need to be sure that both parents are included in this effort.

This can be a special challenge if a child's parents do not get along with one another. Head Start, though, can play a unique role as "neutral territory," where the non-custodial parent can spend some time with the child at the Head Start center. Training sessions on the importance of father involvement should be presented to Head Start parents and staff.

The Head Start program needs to send a message that fathers are welcome—in both obvious and subtle ways. The checklist on this page can help programs ensure that fathers feel welcome at the center. It is crucial that staff be sensitive to the importance of fathers and create an environment that supports their involvement. Negative talk about fathers by staff and mothers should be strongly discouraged. This is especially important for children, whose eyes and ears are always open! Hearing negative comments about their fathers, or men in

general, can have a significant negative impact on children.

One key to involving absent fathers in the lives of their children is to discover what pushed them away, and then to give them the appropriate support to become involved again. Head Start can help by: (1) forming partnerships to support the family—mother and father and child, regardless of whether the parents live together; (2) establishing "team parenting practices," regardless of whether the mother and father live under the same roof; and (3) providing staff training around establishing a father-friendly environment.

Issues between moms and dads can be intense and divisive. Head Start must maintain its focus on the children—and what's best for the children—to cut through those parental relationship issues. This is especially important since welfare is no longer an entitlement and the father's financial and emotional involvement is even more crucial to the child's support and care.

It is important that we in Head Start: (1) have a greater recognition of and respect for the father's importance in the family; (2) enlarge our focus on the need for both parents to be self-sufficient in order to enhance children's well-being; and (3) increase collaboration and coordination around family support, including social services, child support, and employment training.

In Head Start, the needs of children come first. Head Start staff and parents should do all they can to support the healthy growth and development of young children—and that means supporting the involvement of fathers.

Wendell Campbell and James Miller were 1997–98 National Head Start Fellows with the Head Start Bureau in Washington, D.C.

^{1,2} *Based on research cited in "What Policymakers Need to Know about Fathers," by Tamara Halle et al in Policy and Practice, vol. 56, no. 3, December 1998, pp. 21-35.*

Strengthening Families

At the National Head Start Association's annual meeting in April 1998, Dr. Jeffrey Johnson of the Fragile Families Project spoke about supporting families in Head Start and throughout the community. He noted that welfare was originally established for a mother and her children—the father was absent or dead. In fact, welfare was denied to families if a man was present in the household. These policies meant that if a family fell on hard times, the most loving and supportive thing a man could do was to leave his wife and children so that they would be eligible for government support.

Vestiges of this mentality remain—welfare programs continue to be biased in favor of the mother. Even the job training programs established under TANF are aimed at mothers—fathers, who also need support to provide for their families, are not included.

The Strengthening Fragile Families initiative is aimed primarily at the young, low-skilled, never-married couple who's given birth but has not legitimized the event by marriage or the establishment of paternity.

Many of these young women and men start out the same in terms of skills and eligibility for assistance. The mom and dad usually have a relationship, too—one that has existed anywhere from one to two years. But once the woman becomes pregnant and gives birth, a variety of government supports kick in for her—and not for him. Fathers in fragile families often can't help, because they can't compete with the government in providing the support that the child (and the mother) needs. The relationship between the two dissipates as the mother moves into the welfare system alone and is left to be poor alone. The father is left to move on alone, too.

The Strengthening Fragile Families initiative seeks to change this phenomenon by encouraging welfare and family

support systems to recognize low-skilled, unwed parents and their children as a unit, where appropriate. Under this initiative, the Ford Foundation is supporting:

- Identification of Fragile Families—basic research on the relationships between young, low-skilled unwed couples before, during, and shortly after their children are born.
- Enhanced Paternity Establishment—development of policies and family support practices that encourage low-skilled fathers to become involved in the lives of their children, establish legal paternity, and increase employment, earnings, and child support payments.
- Team Parenting—development of family support practices that help unwed parents resolve conflicts and cooperate to provide for their children's needs.
- Communication—outreach efforts to policymakers, researchers, grantmakers, and the broader public to promote the idea of reconnecting fathers and families.
- Dialogue—discussions between men and women at the local and national level about the advantages and risks of reconnecting fathers to families.

Pilot sites for the Fragile Families project have been established in 10 communities around the United States (see map). Through the activities outlined above, the project hopes to provide low-skilled fathers with the skills and support they need to meet the financial, developmental, and emotional needs of their children.

For more information, contact Dr. Jeffrey M. Johnson, President and CEO of the National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership (NPCL), at T: 888-528-6725.



The Forgotten Parent

By James May

James May is president of the National Fathers Network (NFN). For more information, contact NFN's website at www.fathersnetwork.org, or email him at jmay@fathersnetwork.org.

I am writing as a husband and the father of a grown daughter; an educator; a mental health counselor; the coordinator of the only federal program to fully focus on fathers of children with special health care needs; and a health care consumer. I want to talk to you about fathers. In my capacity as the project director for the National Fathers Network, the men I have met have forever changed my life.



Ian and Nicky John of Houston, TX

Kyle Pruett, in his landmark book *The Nurturing Father*, declares that fathering is “the singly most creative, complicated, fulfilling, frustrating, engrossing, enriching, depleting endeavor of a man’s adult life.” It is an undertaking now considered vital—indeed essential—to family health and well being. Yet even Webster’s dictionary defines nurturing as “feminine, lady-like, female, gentle, tender, womanly.” It’s as if men are not even capable of such caring, empathetic responses. Much of this is residue from the old belief that as men we’re only to do the three P’s: provide, protect, and procreate (and barbecue on the side).

The process of redefining oneself takes on new meaning when one’s child is chronically ill or disabled. Men quickly learn they can neither protect their families from the problems nor control the outcomes; there is no quick fix.

The extensive stresses in a family with a child with special needs—emotional, financial, vocational, and educational—can leave a father depressed, helpless, powerless...and very, very angry. The dreams a man brings to his life—lineage, ego fulfillment, athletic, and vocational achievement—are threatened.

Most fathers also experience feelings of failure and guilt. They experience isolation, since there are typically fewer social supports in place for men than women. Their disabled child’s physical appearance and lack of developmental appropriateness may embarrass many men. Bonding and communicating with one’s child may be a painful task.

Feelings of isolation are magnified by a care delivery system that too often excludes, disregards, and disenfranchises men. “It’s as if I don’t exist when the doctors talk about our child,” declared the father of a nine-year-old with cystic fibrosis. Because health services are offered during the day when many men are working, mothers—even though they may also work during the day—generally become the resident “experts.”

Families and professionals now have the chance to build new bridges, to dramatically construct a vision that gives fathers of children with special needs recognition, understanding, and most importantly, substantive programs that speak to dads’ unique concerns.

The positive results of father involvement are endless. Research tells us family communication is enhanced. There is reduced depression and fatigue, improved sharing of parental responsibilities, and increased acceptance of the child. New avenues are opened for fathers to discover the important role they play in the lives of their children. Literally thousands of men have commented to me that they are less competitive, more patient, more receptive to and understanding of people’s differences, and more willing to live in the moment than in the future. Such are the lessons of being the dad of a child with special needs.

The Dad Show: Radio for Dads and Anyone Who Ever Had One



In Austin, Texas, Child Inc. is doing something a little different to open up the discussion on father involvement. Last year it initiated *The Dad Show*, a one-hour weekly call-in talk show designed to focus attention on fathers and encourage them to focus on their families. This show enables Travis County Head Start and other community service programs to reach a larger portion of the community than by any other means. *The Dad Show* has a wide audience that includes men and women; even children get interested in topics the show covers.

A variety of listeners are attracted to the show because of its focus on real-life issues. A program on discipline, for instance, appealed to many people. Many parents had questions about appropriate discipline techniques, and the issue of spanking raised a

interest. Topics have included such issues as health and nutrition, and reading with your kids. Recently, *The Dad Show* featured toys as a topic. Two child psychologists, a Head Start father, and a local toy store owner discussed ways to facilitate parent-child interactions with toys. In this way, Child Inc. has extended its application of the Program Performance Standards to the broader community, reaching many people in a way that is both non-threatening and accessible.

Bill Crawford, host of *The Dad Show*, believes that a large part of its appeal is its focus on practical issues that most families face daily. "The best thing about *The Dad Show*," he commented, "is that we get tremendous response from our listeners. Listeners call because we don't have any political or social agenda. We admit the truth: there is no such thing as an expert dad. No one has all the answers. Everyone has something to contribute to the conversation."

Though *The Dad Show* generally features only local celebrities, from time to time a nationally familiar face will arrive to discuss the perils and rewards of fatherhood. In fact, former President George Bush was interviewed on the very first show. "I believe the decline of the American family is one of the most serious problems this country has," President Bush stated. "I think what you're doing makes a wonderful contribution and is very, very important."

Don't worry if you can't get the show on your local radio. *The Dad Show* is now reaching out to dads through a new website, and previous broadcasts can be heard all over the world on RealAudio at www.dadshow.com.

For more information, contact Rae Freeman, producer of The Dad Show, at T: 512-451-7361; E: dadshow@childinc.org.



Fathers participate as panelists on The Dad Show

heated debate. The show's most popular topic has been child support and custody, but even shows that feature financial advisors make the phones light up with callers.

Each week *The Dad Show* chooses a topic to discuss based on the Head Start Program Performance Standards and general

My Head Start Story

Lisa Sullivan

I was 19 when I became pregnant, and I did everything I could to prepare for what would become the single most important moment in my life. The birth of my son thrust me into baby bliss, but the bliss was all too short. I soon found out that I was not only a mother, but the mother of a seriously ill child.

When John was five weeks old, he was rushed to Yale New Haven Hospital where we learned that he has a life-threatening liver disease. I was crushed, and nothing could have prepared me for what I was about to face.

Once we came home I began the process of evaluating John for the special services he needed to help with his development. At a year old, John still only weighed 13 pounds. Our weeks became filled with appointments, and John's wellness now consumed my life. It was obvious that I would be unable to return to work because of John's needs. I soon realized that, along with receiving Medicaid, I had to face the reality of becoming a single welfare mom.

Client ID numbers, medical cards, and food stamps soon became our way of life. Luckily, there were programs in place to assist my son and me. For the first few years, John participated in the Early Intervention Birth-to-Three program in New London County; with their help, his development skyrocketed. When John was three, we were referred to the Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA) Head Start Program.

I was thrilled to learn that Head Start focuses on both the parent and the child, recognizing the pivotal role that family plays in the growth and development of the child. John did well in Head Start, and I quickly became actively involved in the program. The support of Head Start staff was invaluable. Within the first six months, I had returned to school, taken my high school

equivalency test, and received my GED. I began attending parent committee meetings, socializing with other parents, and attending parenting classes. During the next school year I began to volunteer extensively for the program. Also, I served on the Head Start Policy Council, the Head Start center committee, and my community action agency's board of directors.

This was a very empowering time in my life. I began attending conferences and was elected to serve as my program's representative to the Connecticut Head Start Association. I later became Parent Chairperson of the association and was elected to represent Connecticut parents on the New England Head Start Association board. I now serve as a Region I representative to the NHSA Board of Directors.

In the fall of 1995, I enrolled in an assessment of prior learning class at my local community college. I earned 39 credits towards my degree in one semester, because of the credit I received for my volunteer experience within Head Start. I graduated from college in 1997 and was honored as the outstanding student of my class. It was one of the proudest moments of my life.

Now, years later, I have left the welfare rolls behind and truly lifted my family and myself up by our bootstraps. In December 1998, I became totally self-sufficient when I received a full-time contract to work with the Connecticut Department of Social Services as a Parent Involvement Specialist.

Head Start has provided me with many mentors, role models, and people who have had faith in my potential. Head Start has made me who I am today, and has truly become my family's foundation. It has given me in a few short years what I never could have imagined.



Lisa Sullivan with her son John

Head Start's Impact on My Life

Joy Baldrige

When I first started working for Adams-Brown Head Start in 1994, as a provider in my home, I considered myself a nobody! I had no self-esteem, no future plans, and I had a handicap—no driver's license! Whenever things would get tough I felt like a turtle and would want to hide in my shell and not face the world. But now, in 1997, I have self-esteem, I have a future. I not only have a driver's license, but

I have my commercial driver's license and I know I am somebody!

In 1994, the position of Head Start Day Care provider became available to me. At first, I thought I can't do this; I'm not smart enough,

and it will be another part of my life I will fail at. With the support and encouragement of my supervisor, I did it! I was finally accomplishing something in my life! As the year went on, she kept encouraging me to try for my driver's license. Again, I felt like I would fail and people would look at me as a nobody who couldn't do anything. But, with her encouraging words, "You can do it, just believe in yourself," I decided to go for it. I

did it! I got my driver's license and even went on to get my CDL. Boy, was my self-esteem starting to boost. For once in my life I started to feel like I was a somebody and could accomplish goals that I set for myself. Today, I am working at the Adams-Brown Head Start program as a Bus Driver/Family Advocate. I really enjoy working with parents and encouraging them to believe in themselves, and set goals for the future so that they too know that they are somebody!

Without my Head Start family I would not be where I am today! They have taught me how to believe in myself and that I can succeed in anything I set out to do. I am currently taking college courses to get a degree in early childhood education. I would like to someday become a lead teacher for Head Start so that I too can make a difference in someone's life as Head Start has made in mine!

I want to thank everyone at Head Start for helping me build my self-esteem and showing me how to believe in myself. Whenever the days do get tough and I want to be that turtle once again, I know without a doubt that my Head Start family is always there with a smile, hug, or a note of encouragement to keep me trying for bigger and better accomplishments.

This story first appeared in the Ohio Head Start Association, Inc.'s March-April 1998 newsletter.



Joy Baldrige at the Adams Brown Head Start

Back in Head Start

Frank Olguin

“I was in the first class—and it worked!”

These are the words of Frank Olguin, Region VIII Head Start Program Specialist. Frank is a graduate of the very first Head Start class, held during the summer of 1965. His classroom was in a modular unit on the grounds of the Eugene Field Elementary School in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Frank and his family lived right across the street from the school, and every day Frank’s mother—who had 13 children—walked him to and from school.

Frank didn’t specifically recall that he was a Head Start graduate until a few years ago, when he was home visiting his mother. It was then that she gave him the framed graduation certificate signed by Lady Bird Johnson and Sergeant Shriver and told him how Head Start changed the lives of his family.

Mrs. Olguin remembers Frank’s Head Start experience very well. Although his older siblings went to the same school, his mother had never spent time in the building before. It was the Head Start teacher who made her feel welcome there. She opened Mrs. Olguin’s eyes to the value of education, telling her that education can open doors for anyone. Mrs. Olguin decided that helping her children gain an education was a way to help them succeed.

Frank earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting from Highlands University in New Mexico and recently earned his master’s degree from the Graduate School of Public Affairs at the University of Colorado in Denver.

Frank has worked for the Federal government since graduating from college. The

more he learned about Head Start, the more he wanted to be a Program Specialist. When the opportunity opened up at the Regional Office, he quickly applied. Frank appreciates the value of Head Start and tries very hard to get his programs everything they need, including funds, in order for them to provide quality services to children and families. Frank knows that the people who work in Head Start can make a difference—they did for him. Head Start isn’t just a job—it’s a close community of people who care.

Frank is also a new parent and he applies his Head Start knowledge regarding early childhood development and early brain development to his daughter. “For example,” Fred says, “ever since Francisca was born, my spouse and I have read to her daily, including when I read the newspaper.”

Last year, Frank met Representative Loretta Sanchez at a Woman’s Conference in Denver. In her speech she mentioned being a Head Start graduate, and Frank spoke to her afterwards. She signed his program, “To Frank, my fellow Head Start Graduate. Sigue Adelante! Con cariño, Loretta Sanchez.”

This story first appeared in the March 1998 issue of the Community Development Institute newsletter.



Frank Olguin holds his Head Start and college diplomas

Child Support Enforcement, Child Care, and Head Start Collaboration Grants Awarded to Six States

By John P. Doyle

Under welfare reform, child support services are emerging as a key resource to self-sufficiency for many child care and Head Start families.

Six states are in the second year of implementing demonstration grants to develop models of collaboration among Child Support Enforcement, Child Care, and Head Start programs at state and local levels. The three-year grants were awarded in 1997 to State Child Support Enforcement agencies which, in turn, formed teams with Child Care and Head Start staff to develop state-specific collaboration activities to be implemented in local child support, child care, and Head Start programs. These collaborative efforts promote and facilitate access to child support services through local child care and Head Start programs; they also further a broader understanding of child support and parenting issues within the three programs.

The six states awarded the demonstration grants and the contact person for each state are shown on the right.

For more information, contact John Doyle, Office of Child Support Enforcement, Administration for Children and Families, T: 202-205-4590, E: jdoyle@acf.dhhs.gov

Alaska

Shirley Dean, Project Manager
907-465-5182

Connecticut

Babette Mantilla, Project Coordinator
860-247-6090

Illinois

Lois Rakov, Project Manager
312-793-8213

Maryland

Claudette Sullivan, Project Manager
410-767-7311

Minnesota

Mamie Wertz, Project Coordinator
612-296-2567

Missouri

Clayton Wesley, Project Manager
314-877-2069



*Zaakira Shadeded and her dad
(Child, Inc. in Austin, TX)*

Linking Head Start Quality to Child Outcomes: The FACES Study

Louisa B. Tarullo and Henry M. Doan

The Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) is a longitudinal study of a nationally representative sample of Head Start programs, classrooms, teachers, parents, and children. Its purpose is to examine the overall quality and outcomes of Head Start using specific Program Performance Measures. Through FACES, for the first time, the Head Start program will have national outcome data including observed quality of classrooms, direct assessment and observation of children, and both parent and teacher reports on child functioning over the program year.

Head Start's ultimate goal is to promote the *social competence* of children, defined as the child's everyday effectiveness in dealing with the present environment and later responsibilities in school and life. Helping a child to be ready for school means considering the whole child, including such factors as cognitive, emotional, and social development;

- Providing children with educational, health and nutritional services
- Linking children and families to needed community services
- Ensuring well-managed programs that involve parents in decision-making.

There is a strong connection between the delivery of quality services (process measures) and improvements in child development (outcome measures). Each Program Performance Measure has performance indicators that show how well we are reaching that goal. For example, one outcome-oriented measure for the objective "Enhancing children's healthy growth and development" is: "Head Start children demonstrate improved emergent literacy, numeracy, and language skills." A more process-oriented measure is: "Head Start ensures that children receive needed medical, dental, and mental health services." Data will be drawn from both agency-level sources such as the Program Information Report (PIR)—a program-level reporting system completed by each Head Start program annually—and the Head Start FACES study.

In the spring of 1997, FACES studied 2,400 children and families in 40 programs nationwide in a variety of child development areas, including: emergent literacy, numeracy, and language skills; general cognitive skills; gross and fine motor skills; positive attitudes towards learning; social behavior and emotional well-being; and physical health.

The measurements were obtained using direct child assessment, observation, and both parent and teacher report. In addition, parents were interviewed about their life experiences and involvement and satisfaction with Head Start. Classrooms were assessed on scheduling, the early childhood learning environment, and teacher behavior. (See "FACES: Early Findings.")

FACES has continued with Fall 1997 and Spring 1998 data collections on a nationally representative sample of 3,200 children and families in the same 40 programs. Children and parents are studied at entry into Head Start,

physical and mental health; and nutritional needs. Does the five-year-old child coming to the end of the preschool period demonstrate the skills, understandings, and behaviors that will help ensure successful functioning in the school environment? FACES will help to answer this question for Head Start graduates.

Based on the goal of promoting social competence, the Performance Measures are indicators that chart the Head Start program's progress in meeting the following five objectives (illustrated in Figure 1):

- Enhancing children's healthy growth and development
- Strengthening families as the primary nurturers of their children

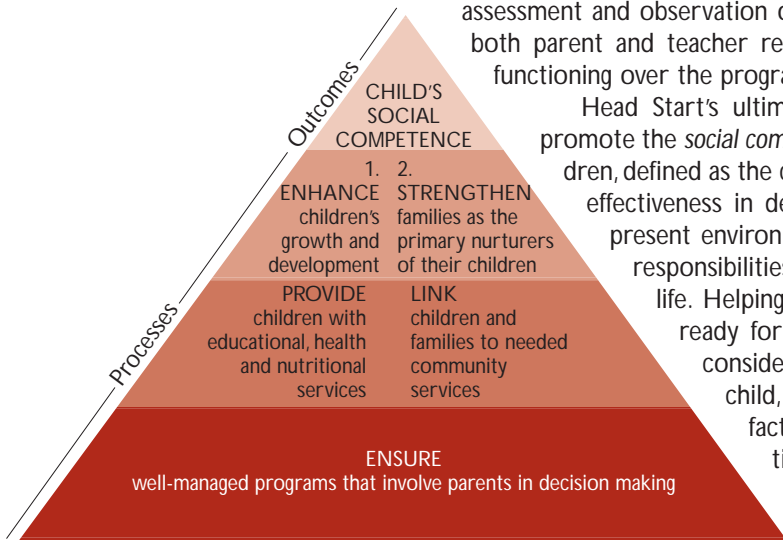


Figure 1. Head Start Program Performance Measures Conceptual Framework

completion of the program (whether one or two years), and after a year of kindergarten.

Research has consistently linked aspects of classroom quality such as low child-adult ratio, small group size, responsiveness of teacher-child interaction, and richness of learning environments to better child outcomes. For the first time using a national sample, FACES tests the same linkages in Head Start. Preliminary data show that the higher the quality of a Head Start classroom, the more likely that children will show higher levels of skills and, over time, display greater gains in developmental outcomes. FACES will also provide information on what aspects of the Head Start classroom experience could be improved in order to enhance children's readiness to take on new challenges in school.

Results of the FACES study are available through the Head Start Publications Management Center (HSPMC). For a copy of the *Head Start Performance Measures Second Progress Report*, including data from the Spring 1997 FACES pilot, see the Head Start Bureau web page at www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb, the CORE web page at www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/rde, or order from the HSPMC by fax 703-683-5769 or E-mail: hspmc6@mail.idt.net.

Louisa B. Tarullo and Henry M. Doan are Research Analysts in the Commissioner's Office of Research and Evaluation (CORE), Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The FACES study is conducted by a team of researchers including Nicholas Zill and Gary Resnick from Westat, Inc.; David Connell and Janet Swartz from Abt Associates; Ruth Hubbell McKey and Cheryl Clark from Ellsworth Associates; and Robert O'Brien and Mary Ann D'Elia from The CDM Group, Inc.

FACES: Early Findings

The findings from the FACES research are encouraging: the quality in most Head Start classrooms is good (no classrooms score in the poor range) and, perhaps most important, program quality is related to children's outcomes.

Head Start Classroom Quality is Good

- Trained observers of 403 classrooms using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) found that average quality is in the "good" range.
- No Head Start classrooms score below the "minimal quality" rating, unlike other large studies of center-based preschools.
- Head Start class size and child-to-adult ratios meet or exceed standards.
- More than 68 percent of Head Start lead teachers report some college experience or a college degree.

Head Start Children Are Ready for School

- The typical four-year-old completing Head Start has knowledge and skills in early literacy and numeracy, as well as social skills signifying readiness to learn in kindergarten.
- Head Start four-year-olds perform above the levels expected for children from low-income families who have not attended center-based programs.

Program Quality is Linked to Child Performance

- Children score higher on early literacy measures when they experience richer teacher-child interaction, more language learning opportunities, and a classroom well equipped with learning resources.
- Children who attend two years of Head Start perform better than children who attend only one year.

Head Start Families Are Involved Despite Challenges

- Head Start parents are almost equally likely to be married as single, typically have two or three children, and most have at least a high school diploma or GED.
- Most households have at least one family member employed, but a majority receive some form of public assistance, such as food stamps, welfare, or Medicaid.
- Almost a quarter of Head Start parents speak a primary language other than English.
- A significant minority of Head Start families are facing major challenges, such as lacking employment, living in extreme poverty, or experiencing crime, frequent moves or homelessness.
- Head Start parents are involved with their children at home and in the program; 66 percent read to their child three or more times a week; 70 to 90 percent teach letters, numbers, or songs; and more than 90 percent involve their children in chores or errands, play with them, and talk with them about Head Start.
- Most Head Start parents participate at least once in a Head Start activity during the year, despite work, school, child care, and transportation barriers.
- Parents less likely to participate include single parents, parents who have not graduated from high school, and employed parents, but participation is equal across English-speaking and non-English-speaking families.
- Almost 90 percent of parents are very satisfied with Head Start's program services, safety, and promotion of child growth and development.

Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project

Helen H. Raikes and Louisa B. Tarullo

The Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project is an intensive study of Early Head Start (EHS) programs for infants and toddlers in low-income families. The study includes approximately 3,000 families living in 17 diverse communities that reflect the current socioeconomic and political context of low-income families. A broad range of outcomes is being measured, extensive information is being collected about the programs and individual families' experiences with them, and state-of-the-art analyses are being conducted to link experiences with outcomes. The research is being conducted by Mathematica Policy Research in Princeton, NJ, and Columbia University in collaboration with researchers in 15 universities.

The EHS Research and Evaluation Project encompasses five major components:

1. *An implementation study* to examine service needs and use for low-income families with infants and toddlers, assess program implementation, understand programs' theories of change, illuminate pathways to achieving quality, examine program contributions to community change, and identify and explore variations across sites.
2. *An impact evaluation* to analyze the effects of Early Head Start programs on children, parents, and families in depth, using an experimental design; descriptive analyses will assess outcomes for program staff and communities.
3. *Local research studies* by local researchers to learn more about the pathways to desired outcomes for infants and toddlers, parents and families, staff, and communities.
4. *Policy studies* to respond to information needs in areas of emerging policy-relevant issues, including welfare reform, fatherhood, child care, and children with disabilities.
5. *Formats for continuous program improvement* to guide all EHS programs in formative evaluation.

Unique Elements of the Early Head Start Research Project

Consideration of the differences among EHS programs when looking at outcomes. EHS program approaches vary in important ways. For example, some programs deliver child development services through child care, and others use a home visitation approach. These different approaches are appropriate for different programs that have individual community needs, populations, and geography. Early intervention literature suggests that these differences among programs will result in differences in the type and timing of outcomes. Outcomes will also probably be different among programs that emphasize different things. The EHS studies will take all of these variables into consideration when assessing how a program is having an impact on a family and a community.

Use of the Program Performance Standards as a basis for rating all participating programs. A panel of experts will review the information gathered from the implementation research and rate each program based on the Standards. This systematic assessment makes it possible to determine whether an EHS program is being implemented in each site the way it was designed.

Assessment of the quality and quantity of key services for children in both EHS and comparison groups. Previous evaluations have not examined in detail the effects of different configurations of child development services available on children.

Analysis of outcomes by actual program participation. When the project looks at how effective a program has been with a family, the study takes that family's participation into consideration. EHS research is listening to program directors who state that they do not expect programs to help families who drop

out. After the effects on families have been assessed, the project will adjust the results based on different levels of participation in a program.

Use of the same research team to evaluate programs. Often, two research teams evaluate programs, making it difficult for researchers to interpret how a particular program is affecting children and families. When one research team evaluates a program it is easier to analyze a program's impact in relation to its implementation.

Local researchers. They will often have a unique picture of the local program and community, and this knowledge will add to interpretations of the data. Data from local studies will supplement national data.

The Father Studies

Early Head Start (EHS) does more to promote father involvement than has typically been done in other early intervention programs for infants and toddlers. EHS programs work directly with fathers and father-figures through such activities as including fathers in home visits; implementing father outreach efforts; providing opportunities for direct father-child interactions; targeting increased male participation in the program; and adding support groups for couples.

The Early Head Start (EHS) Research and Evaluation project is among the first to explore the involvement of low-income fathers in children's lives, together with mother involvement, in the context of both an intervention program for infants and toddlers and a longitudinal study. The Father Studies help to fill a significant gap in knowledge by increasing our understanding of how fathers and mothers, in the context of the family, influence infant and toddler development. The EHS father research enables us to learn more about how programs

support fathers' relationships with their babies and with the babies' mothers.

The Father Studies represent a coordinated effort of many different agencies. They include the EHS Research Consortium; the Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF); the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE); the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD); and the Ford Foundation. Together, they work in the spirit of the Fatherhood Initiative started by President Clinton in 1995.

The Father Studies involve four strands:

Interviews with fathers of 24- and 36-month-old children. These interviews in 14 sites examine how fathers influence child and family outcomes. The study also investigates how services influence father involvement, what aspects of programs are effective in getting fathers to participate, and how aspects of a father's life contribute to his involvement in and enjoyment of fathering. In five sites, videotaped observations will provide critical information about father-child interactions.

Study of Fathers of Newborns. This strand, supported by the Ford Foundation, follows 200 to 300 fathers and mothers of newborns. They are interviewed when their children are 1, 3, 6, 14, 24, and 36 months of age to provide an in-depth look at the changing nature of fatherhood and father involvement in children's lives from birth until age 3.

The Practitioner's Study. This strand, also funded by the Ford Foundation, focuses on understanding the different strategies EHS programs use to get fathers involved, and how these strategies serve fathers' needs, their successes and challenges, and how they have changed over time. This strand also looks at how a father's relationship with his child is influenced by

an EHS program.

Local Research Studies. These studies are looking at a variety of issues, with each research team focusing on a unique topic. At Michigan State University, for example, researchers are studying the unique contributions of biological fathers; at Utah State University, they're investigating fathers' modes of play with infants and toddlers.

Early findings of the EHS Father Studies are summarized in the box on the next page. Additional preliminary reports from the EHS Father Studies will be prepared periodically over the next four years, with public use data sets scheduled for release in 2002. For further information, see web-sites at:

- www.mathematica-mpr.com
- www.acf.dhhs/programs/hsb
- www.acf.dhhs/programs/rde

Helen H. Raikes was a Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) Fellow at ACYF from 1994-96. She is currently at the Gallup Organization, Lincoln, NE, and continues her affiliation with the EHS Research and Evaluation Project.

Louisa B. Tarullo is a Research Analyst in the Commissioner's Office of Research and Evaluation, Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. E: lbtarullo@acf.dhhs.gov.

Project director and co-principal investigator for the EHS National Research and Evaluation Study is John Love, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. Ellen Kisker, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., and Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Columbia University, are co-principle investigators. The EHS Father Studies Work Group, consisting of EHS national and local researchers and representatives from ACYF, NICHD, ASPE, and the Ford Foundation, carries out Father Studies. Raikes and Tarullo provide oversight of the national research, and Esther Kresh, Head Start Bureau, is the Project Officer.

Early Findings of the Father Studies

- Father involvement was identified as a focus for all Early Head Start programs in the survey of 17 research programs. All the programs reported that they are taking specific steps to involve fathers. The programs have hired men in various staffing capacities, and a majority of the programs have designated a staff member whose responsibility is to promote father involvement.
- Programs employ a variety of strategies for involving fathers. They report the greatest success in including fathers with activities that focus on parenting or include the children. They report fathers are moderately likely to participate in Policy Councils or advisory boards, attend recreational activities for men and children, and attend men's meetings about employment.
- Programs are making adjustments as they identify effective strategies and challenges. Some of these adjustments include: developing men's support groups; developing a Male Involvement Plan; using language in program materials that addresses both parents; becoming intentional about using male staff and husbands of staff as role models; developing a survey for fathers; changing the schedule of activities to be more convenient to working fathers; changing mailing lists to include fathers; including fathers in home visits; making a conscious effort to involve fathers in all areas of the program; involving fathers at the time of recruitment and enrollment; having male staff actively involved in recruitment; enabling staff to conduct home visits in teams of two, when appropriate; using more than one staff person to work with the family when the father and mother are separated or are in conflict; and changing the program model from one focused on the mother-child relationship to one that is family-focused.
- Programs have identified challenges that future research will help them to address. These challenges include a mother-centric program image; fathers who live outside of the home; changing father figures in a child's life; mothers and fathers in conflict with one another; mothers who do not want the father to be involved in the child's life; time for working with the family to be inclusive of fathers when the mother plays a "gatekeeping" role for the father's involvement; and staff fears related to working with men who had been incarcerated or were known to be involved in domestic violence or substance abuse.
- From focus groups with involved fathers at four sites, researchers report that many fathers are highly committed and very much want to be involved with their children. Interviewers were struck by the strength of the fathers' determination to "be there" for their children and to assume financial responsibility for their children. Fathers and mothers differed somewhat in their perceptions of what fathers should be doing for their children. Many mothers believed that fathers should take a more active role in physical caregiving, such as diapering, feeding, and bathing, while fathers perceived they were already doing these things. Fathers described rough-and-tumble physical play or cuddling and tickling as their primary forms of play with their young children. Fathers expressed greatest frustration in dealing with ill or crying children.
- Except for the EHS program, many of the fathers lacked a support system and role models, but were also reluctant to accept help. Fathers had many aspirations for their children but few concrete and positive ideas for helping them meet those goals. Some fathers expressed a sense of betrayal by the educational and social service systems. Fathers were reluctant to consider barriers or "downsides" to being a father. With the exception of those fathers who were already actively involved in some part of an EHS program, most fathers were unable to identify sources of support for their role as father.

The "10/60" Rule

On many occasions, we all meet people who ask what we do for a living. Many of them might be potential donors or volunteers. Being prepared for these unexpected moments can bring unexpected rewards.

Rather than stumbling through an explanation when you're caught off-guard, the "10/60" rule provides a short, organized way to describe ten

things about your Head Start program in 60 seconds.

Practice a 60-second response that includes these ten pieces of information:

- Name of your program
- Years in existence
- Mission
- Number of children and families served last year

- Services provided
- Community served
- Sources of funding
- Current needs
- Number of staff members
- Number of governing body and policy group members

With this information at your fingertips, you'll be able to respond well to questions and help to spread the good word about Head Start in your community!

1998–99 National Head Start Fellows

By Kathy Hallissey

Each year ten leaders in the field of early childhood education are chosen to come to Washington, D.C., to share their skills and learn new ones. The 1998–99 Head Start Fellows represent a wide variety of talent and experience in areas of program development, research, health, policy, and child and family development. In addition to working with the Head Start Bureau, Fellows have been placed in such government agencies as the Department of Education, the Child Care Bureau, and the Commissioner's Office at the Administration on Children, Youth and Families.

Following is a brief description of the 1998–99 Fellows and their placement in various federal agencies promoting the health and well-being of children across the country.

Gina Barclay-McLaughlin—Gina is from the University of Chicago in Chicago, Illinois, where she works as a Senior Research Associate. She is spending her fellowship year with the Office of the Commissioner in the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, where she is focusing on research and evaluation.

Amanda Bryans—Amanda is from East Nassau, New York, where she works with Albany County Opportunity, Inc. and is responsible for a program that serves nearly 400 children. She is now working in the Program Management and Operations Branch of the Head Start Bureau, focusing on monitoring and national training for new directors.

Alisa Burton—Alisa, a family advocate from Oakland Head Start in Albany, California, has a split placement. She spends time in the Bureau on Maternal and Child Health focusing on health and safety issues in child care, in addition to working with the Health and Disabilities branch of the Head Start Bureau on disabilities training and technical assistance.

Joyce Brown McCorvey—Joyce works as the director of federal and pre-kindergarten programs for the Santa Rosa County Public Schools in her home town of Milton, Florida. During her fellowship, she is working with the Department of Education focusing on the America Reads Campaign and collaboration with other agencies.

Lynn Mitchell—Lynn, from the Governor's Office in Bethesda, Maryland, also has a split placement. Part of her Fellowship year is being spent in the Administration for Children and Families' Office of Family Assistance, helping support TANF implementation. She is also working with the Child Care Bureau.

Kelly Packer—Kelly is president and chief executive officer of Packer & Associates in Albuquerque, New Mexico. While in Washington she is sharing her time between the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration, supporting the Starting Early, Starting Smart project, and the Head Start Bureau.

Lucia Palacios—Lucia, the area director of an Early Head Start program in Bonita, California, is in the Program Support Division of the Head Start Bureau where she is focusing on Early Head Start.

Barbara Saunders—Barbara works as a parent involvement coordinator with the Lee County District Early Intervention Program in Ft. Myers, Florida. While in Washington, she is working with the Child Care Bureau on supporting the Regional Offices, in addition to other special initiatives.

Dolores Terrazas—Dolores has traveled across the country from San Francisco, California, where she works for the California Child Care Initiative, to spend her fellowship year working with the Migrant Programs Branch and the State Collaboration Offices in the Head Start Bureau.

Ida Tewa—Ida is from the Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council in San Juan Pueblo, New Mexico. She is working with the American Indian Programs Branch of the Head Start Bureau focusing on child care partnerships and facilities.

For more information on the National Head Start Fellowship program, contact Kathy Hallissey at T: 202-205-8420, E: khallissey@acfdhhs.gov

Head Start Resources

Our Stories Keep Us Connected **Linking Our Voices**

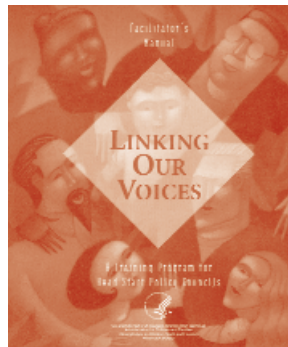
The *Our Stories Keep Us Connected* package includes a parent guide and video to help parents and teachers understand children better through the stories they tell. Children hear stories every day, and through these stories they learn to make sense of the world. *Our Stories Keep Us Connected* builds on the



premise that “learning is building new ideas from stories we live, see, and hear all around us.” Through listening to these stories, parents and teachers can build a stronger relationship with their children and gain a new appreciation for how and what they learn. The guide can be used by staff and parents together, groups of parents, or by parents alone with their children. It is available in English and Spanish.

For a free copy for Head Start grantees, fax your request to the Head Start Publications Management Center at 703-683-5769.

If you’ve ever wondered how to get parents involved in program governance, you should take a look at the new *Linking Our Voices* training package. *LOV*, as it is affectionately known, is a video-based training package from the Head Start Bureau that is designed to help the entire Head Start community understand the value of parent involvement in program governance. It also helps in making the transition to the revised Program Performance Standards.



Each part of the *LOV* training is designed to help programs make family and community partnerships a reality. The package, available in English and Spanish, contains a 22-minute training video and a facilitator’s manual for four workshops, with detailed instructions. The workshops are:

Music to My Ears. The first workshop in the package provides a step-by-step way of understanding and appreciating the benefits of parent involvement in program governance. Participants examine benefits of partnerships to the parent, the parent’s family, to the program, and to the community at large.

Having a Voice. This session describes the various levels of parent participation in program governance, from the Parent Committee to the Policy Committee and/or the Policy Council. Each level empowers parents to share in the processes of making decisions about their program.

Three-Part Harmony. The third workshop in the series focuses on shared decision making. Activities provide excellent experi-

The Head Start Publications Management Center (HSPMC) has wide variety of publications and resources available. For a current catalogue, or to place an order, contact the HSPMC by fax at 703-683-5769 or by E-mail at pub-order@hskids-tmhc.org

mental opportunities for staff, parents, and governing body members.

Theme Songs. This is an innovative training module where participants identify the concerns and issues that will focus their involvement for the year. The workshop takes them through the processes of selecting issues and then campaigning for their support by the larger body of parents.

Special training is available to local programs on customizing and using the LOV package as a year-long training program. For additional information, call Akil Rahim at 1-800-628-8442 or 1-800-688-1675.

National Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community

Building on Success is designed for Head Start staff working in partnership with parents on self-sufficiency goals. It focuses on the skills needed to: develop a personal plan for education and employment; create career ladder opportunities for parents within the Head Start program; and mobilize community resources to support families.

Building Supportive Communities focuses on the significance of strong relationships within both Head Start and the broader community. It illustrates how positive relationships among staff, families, and community organizations provide critical support for Head Start children and families. The skills needed to build and maintain strong partnerships are also discussed.

Communicating with Parents addresses the value of effective communications—speaking and listening skills, as well as the ability to write clearly and concisely. Good communication skills are especially useful in building partnerships with parents and planning communication strategies at the program level.

A Design for Family Support reinforces Head Start's role as a family support program and defines the framework for sup-

porting families. The concepts and principles of supporting families are presented along with the skills necessary to develop those relationships that enhance family support.

Engaging Parents addresses the basics of parent involvement. Information is provided on adapting activities for individual parents, identifying staff support of parent involvement, and analyzing current parent involvement practices. Creating a common vision for parent involvement is also discussed, along with an outline of observation and listening skills needed to identify how each staff person contributes to and supports parent involvement.

Family Partnerships: A Continuous Process focuses on those skills of the family goal setting process that support family growth: learning from significant life events, identifying internal and external supports, visioning, creating a family picture, setting goals, developing and implementing a family plan and providing follow-up.

Partners in Decision Making discusses training for staff and parents on how to work together as a team, respecting each other's unique contribution to the group process and to the Head Start program. Specifically, this guide focuses on creating a climate for decision-making partnerships, building trusting relationships among team members, and decision-making strategies.

Supporting Families in Crisis provides staff with a framework for understanding, identifying, and responding to family crises. The guide also provides staff with the opportunity to explore safety issues posed by crisis situations; to learn strategies for reducing personal risk; and to learn strategies aimed at preventing crises in vulnerable families.

Other Head Start Resources

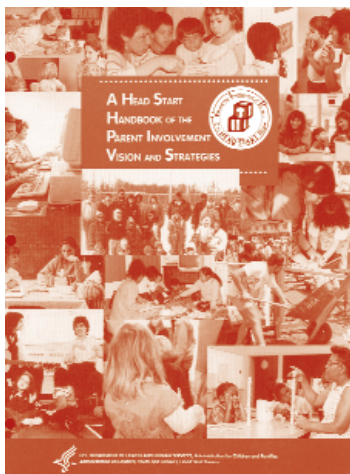
Looking at Life Curriculum: Session Plans is an education program that focuses on parents and promotes group support during the learning process. It offers parents opportunities to look at their lives from

COMING SOON!

Keep an eye out for two new Training Guides: *Designing Parenting Education Programs* and *Supporting Family Learning*

new perspectives and to share ideas and support with other parents. The curriculum contains four modules, with three sessions in each module. The modules can be used independently, or several modules can be grouped together for a longer program. Groups of 8 to 20 parents can explore a wide range of topics using a variety of learning modes: discussion, brainstorming, reading, information sheets, role play, art activities, children's games and play, exercise, and relaxation techniques.

Head Start Handbook of the Parent Involvement Vision and Strategies is a two-part manual to help programs implement the Head Start Vision for Parent Involvement. Part I discusses each element



of the Head Start Vision for Parent Involvement and includes questions to help programs think through their own response to the parent involvement mission. Part II presents a variety of strategies that Head Start programs can use in carrying out the vision. Action steps, activities, and tips for implementation are included. Programs are also encouraged to develop their own strategies for parent involvement.

Additional Resources

(not available through HSPMC)

Head Start: Helping Families Move from Welfare to Work is a report of the

Children's Defense Fund's Child Care and Development Division. It describes some of the ways that Head Start programs across the country are helping families cope with the new welfare laws. The report cites "adult education, computer training, pre-employment training, job shadowing and internships" as just a few of the opportunities that Head Start is offering. In addition, the report highlights Head Start's emphasis on collaboration as a means to provide services to the community. For more information, contact the Children's Defense Fund at T: 202-628-8787 or visit its website at www.childrensdefense.org.

New Visions for Parents

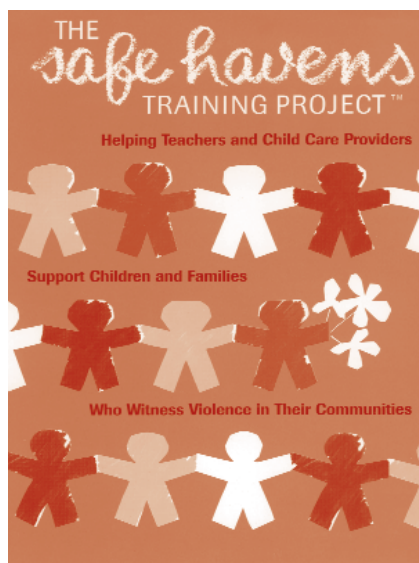
Zero to Three has developed a set of materials entitled **New Visions for Parents** for parents (or staff who know of parents) who are concerned about their child's development. The materials include: (1) a letter for parents about developmental assessment of babies and very young children; (2) **New Visions: A Parent's Guide to Understanding Developmental Assessment**; (3) **Planning and Preparing Your Child's Developmental Assessment**; and (4) a list of terms frequently used in developmental assessment. For more information, contact Zero to Three at T: 202-638-1144.

A Training Manual for Developing Family and Community Partnerships with Head Start-Preschool Families

This manual guides Head Start staff through the process of developing family and community partnerships. Specific steps, activities, and follow-up exercises and questions are provided. The manual also offers information on how to assist a family in developing goals, planning, and problem solving. Elements of the manual include: "Developing a Family Partnership Agreement," "Linking Head Start-Preschool Families to Resources," and "Using Collaboration and Advocacy in Community Partnerships." For more information, contact James Bush at T: 213-653-8332, or write to him at 6399 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 114, Los Angeles, CA 90048. The cost for the manual is \$35 plus \$6 shipping and handling.

The Safe Havens Training Project

This three-part, video-based series focuses on community violence and takes a close look at what our children are coping with in their day-to-day lives. The impact that violence has on a child's development is examined, along with what teachers, parents, and community members can do to provide children with a sense of safety and security. In addition to the videos, training resources include materials for three workshops, an outreach supplement for parents and community members, and resources. For more information, contact Elizabeth Seamans, writ-



er and producer of *Safe Havens*, at T: 412-687-2990; F: 412-687-1226 or write to Family Communications, Inc. at 4802 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213. The cost for the entire kit is \$175 plus \$7.95 shipping and handling.

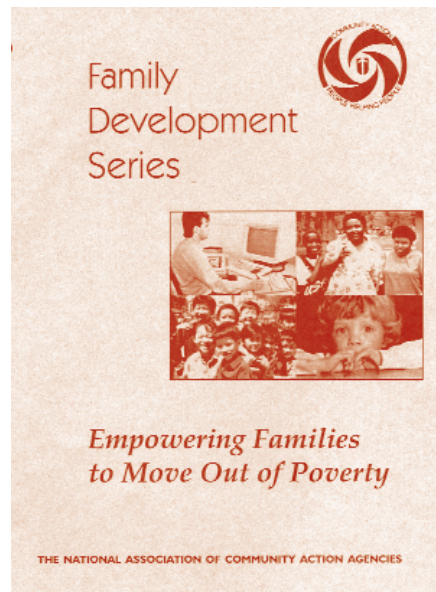
A Parent Mentor Training Guide

This guide is based on the work of the Parent Partners mentoring program at Project REACH in Newport, Rhode Island. The program is based on the belief that the way to help a child is to help a family and offers guidance on developing a mentor program—training mentors from the communi-

ty to partner with parents who are having difficulty. The program draws on a community's strengths and collective wisdom through its parent-to-parent approach. For more information, contact Ray D. Davis, Family Service Director of Project REACH, at T: 401-848-2470; F: 401-842-0332; or write to Project REACH at Newport Public Schools, 435 Broadway, Newport, RI 02840.

Empowering Families to Move Out of Poverty

A part of the National Association of Community Action Agencies' Family Development Series, this manual leads the reader on an exploration of developmental programming for low-income families. It contains valuable guidance and information related to welfare reform. The manual is



geared towards family development staff, and offers them suggestions and tools for working with low-income and at-risk families. The manual is \$20 for members of the National Association of Community Action Agencies, and \$35 for nonmembers. For more information, contact Monica Brown at T: 202-265-7546.

Send Us Story Ideas!

The purpose of the Bulletin is to serve the Head Start community, and we want to hear from you! Send us information on events and new initiatives you've been involved in, and send us photographs! When you send us photos, please be sure to include the following:

- The names of any people pictured in the photo
- Signed forms from each person in the photo giving us permission to print it
- Where the photo was taken (or at what event)
- The name of your Head Start program


Please do not write in ink on the back of the photo—it smears when you stack them and ruins the picture underneath! Use a label or a pencil (and don't press too hard).

Because we keep these materials on file for use both now and in the future, we would appreciate your sending only those photos and materials that you do not need returned. Send your questions, comments, and contributions to:

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