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	3. Originating Office: Head Start Bureau	
	4. Key Word: Parent-Mentor Training Program	

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM: [See Attachments]

TO: All Early Head Start and Head Start Grantee and Delegate Agencies

SUBJECT: The Head Start Parent-Mentor Training Program

INFORMATION:

The Head Start Bureau is launching a Parent-Mentor Training Program aimed at increasing the ability of parents to enhance their children's language and literacy skills as well as learning how to mentor other parents to do the same with their children. Mothers, fathers, and legal guardians of children who will be returning to Head Start this coming September for one more year before entering kindergarten will be eligible to apply for training as a Head Start Parent-Mentor.

This effort, authorized by Section 648(a)(2) of the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. 9843(a)(2), supports the President's *Good Start, Grow Smart Early Childhood Initiative* which stresses the importance of supporting parents and families in rearing their children. It also reflects the Head Start program's philosophy and commitment to parents and to helping parents enhance their children's growth and development while developing skills which will help them advocate for their own and other children in their community.

This summer, the Head Start Bureau will conduct twelve Parent-Mentor training events in ten regions. At each event approximately 300 mothers, fathers and legal guardians representing local Head Start grantees and delegate agencies, will be trained as Head Start Parent-Mentors.

This training is designed to:

- Increase parents' knowledge of children's language and literacy development, including everyday ways to support children in their learning.
- Provide participants with critical communication skills and strategies for connecting with and mentoring other parents in their communities.

Application Process

Those eligible to apply are mothers, fathers and legal guardians who have:

- A child who is returning to Head Start in the fall of 2004, and who will go to kindergarten in the fall of 2005;
- A high school diploma or a GED;
- The ability to travel and fully participate in the training in their region; and
- A commitment to return to their community to work with their children on what they have learned and to share this knowledge with other parents.

In addition to confirming that they are eligible to participate in the Parent-Mentor training, applicants will also be asked to provide a brief statement regarding why they think they would be an effective Head Start Parent-Mentor.

Enclosed is a letter inviting parents to apply. Please distribute the letter to all eligible mothers, fathers and legal guardians. Also enclosed is information regarding the dates and locations of the twelve summer training events. Parents from Migrant and Seasonal and American Indian and Alaska Native programs are to apply for the training event that is closest to their home.

Eligible applicants may get specific information regarding application procedures by visiting www.headstartinfo.org and clicking on Parent-Mentor Training Program or by contacting the Parent-Mentor toll free hotline **1-877-488-4888**. Applicants will be asked to provide such information as their name, address, telephone number, and program name. They will be assigned a five digit code so that they may proceed to submit their application through an automated telephone process. Applicants may also apply on-line at: www.headstartinfo.org. Our goal is to have a parent participant from each grantee and delegate agency.

Applications must be submitted either by phone or on-line by Thursday, May 20, 2004. Decisions on successful applicants will be made by May 28, 2004. All applicants will be notified by June 4, 2004. The Head Start Bureau and its contractors are required by law to protect confidentiality. The information parents provide through the application process will be used or disclosed solely for the purpose for which it is intended, which is to identify participants for the Parent-Mentor training to be held this summer. All personally identifying information will be deleted from US Department of Health and Human Services owned or supported systems once parents have been confirmed. No personally identifying information will be used for any other purpose.

Regional TA staff will provide on-going support to the parent-mentoring initiative. Parent-Mentors will be encouraged to share experiences, information and materials through the Head Start Parent-Mentor Web site. Additionally, a section of the National Head Start Bulletin will be devoted to highlighting the successes and other interesting experiences of Head Start Parent-Mentors in various communities nationwide.

Funding

Supplemental funding will be made available to grantees to cover the costs of parent participation. Once grantees are notified that their parent or a parent from their delegate agency has been selected, they are expected to submit a supplemental funding application request (SF 424) to the Regional Office. The supplement would cover air and ground travel costs, as appropriate, as well as up to three and half days of per diem and lodging. Average costs for this type and length of training are approximately 1,200 dollars. Costs maybe considerably less for parents living short distances from the training and, in some isolated cases, costs could be more, particularly when traveling from very distant or remote areas. Regional Offices will work with grantees to ensure that costs are reasonable.

Grantee and delegate agencies are expected to support interested parents through the application process as needed. Grantees and delegate agencies are also expected to facilitate selected parents' participation by assisting them with their travel and other arrangements. For funding questions, please call your Program Specialist in the Regional Office.

The Head Start Parent-Mentor Training Program is an opportunity for parents to become more involved with their children as well as to provide leadership to other parents and the community. We hope that parents who have not yet realized their leadership potential will participate in this experience and come away with both a new set of skills as well as an enhanced sense of self.

Sincerely,

/ Windy M. Hill /

Windy M. Hill
Associate Commissioner
Head Start Bureau



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Head Start Bureau
330 C Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20447

May 11, 2004

Dear Head Start Parent:

I am pleased to announce the exciting new Head Start Parent-Mentor Training Program. This project is part of the President's *Good Start, Grow Smart Initiative*, which seeks to help young children to be ready to succeed in school and in life by improving their language and literacy skills. The involvement of mothers, fathers and legal guardians is very important to the healthy development of their children, especially for the important tasks involved in helping them get ready to succeed in school.

Head Start Parent-Mentors will gain knowledge and skills to help them work with their own children on language and literacy skills, as well as, to mentor other parents to do the same with their children. Please consider becoming a Parent-Mentor and attending 2.5 days of training this summer if you have:

- a 4 year old child who is returning to Head Start in the fall of 2004, and will go to kindergarten in the fall of 2005;
- a high school diploma, a GED or attended college;
- the ability to travel and participate in your region's training; and
- a commitment to return to your community to work with your children and to share this knowledge with other parents.

If you apply, you will be asked to confirm your eligibility and you will also be asked to provide a brief statement about why you believe you would make an effective Head Start Parent-Mentor. The registration information you provide will be used solely for the purpose of the Parent-Mentor training and will only be shared with the program in which your child is enrolled.

Your application must be submitted by May 20, 2004. If you are selected, your Head Start program will be given funds to cover the costs of your participation. It is important to note that child care services will not be available at the training site. Therefore, it is essential that you make safe and appropriate child care arrangements before you leave home.

If you would like more information about these requirements and the application process, please call the Parent-Mentor hotline at 1-877-488-4888 . Information is also available at www.headstartinfo.org Parent-Mentor Training.

I hope you will consider participating in this leadership opportunity.

Sincerely,

/ Windy M. Hill /

Windy M. Hill
Associate Commissioner
Head Start Bureau

Head Start Parent-Mentor Training Program July - August 2004 Schedule

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
JULY 24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Region V - Palmer House Hilton Chicago			Region V - Palmer House Hilton Chicago			
Region II - Hyatt Regency Jersey City on the Hudson						
31	AUGUST 1	2	3	4	5	6
Region VII - Kansas City Marriott Country Club Plaza						
Region IX - Hilton San Francisco						
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Region III - Adam's Mark Philadelphia				Region I - Boston Marriott Long Wharf		
Region VIII - Hyatt Regency Tech Center Denver				Region X - Sheraton Seattle Hotel and Towers		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Region IV - Crowne Plaza Atlanta - Perimeter			Region IV - Crowne Plaza Atlanta - Perimeter			
		Region VI - Westin Park Central Dallas				