

ACF Administration for Children and Families	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	
	1. Log No. ACF-IM-HS-08-20	2. Issuance Date: 11/18/08
	3. Originating Office: Office of Head Start	
	4. Key Words: Vision Screening	

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees and Delegate Agencies

SUBJECT: Vision Screening Resources

ABSTRACT:

Head Start Program Performance Standard 1304.20(b)(1) requires that all Head Start and Early Head Start children are screened for potential concerns with regard to vision within the first 45 days of entry into Head Start. In order to assist and support programs in their efforts to accurately screen children for vision concerns and follow up on these concerns, the Office of Head Start (OHS) and Prevent Blindness America (PBA) have entered into a partnership.

INFORMATION:

Vision disorders are a leading cause of impaired conditions in children. If not detected early, pediatric vision problems can lead to a variety of difficulties. The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework for the collaboration between PBA and OHS to improve the vision health of Head Start and Early Head Start children. PBA affiliates will inform Head Start programs about vision screening services and other resources available to them in their community. As a result, through accurate vision screening and follow up, a vast number of children in need of vision health services will be reached.

PBA, a volunteer health agency which was founded in 1908, has a mission to prevent blindness and preserve the sight of all Americans. This mission includes public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening training, community and patient service programs and research. A key element of PBA's nationwide promotion of a continuum of vision care is its development of a series of vision screening courses that address both pediatric and adult eye care. PBA is committed to seeing a standard level of care provided across programs, achieved through its certification program. This certification program includes protocols that are determined by the PBA board of directors, based on the recommendations of experts in vision care from across the nation.

Head Start Program Performance Standard 1304.20(b)(1) requires: "In collaboration with each child's parent, and within 45 calendar days of the child's entry into the program, grantee and delegate agencies must perform or obtain linguistically and age appropriate screening procedures to identify concerns regarding a child's developmental, sensory (visual and auditory), behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, perceptual, and emotional skills (see 45 CFR 1308.6(b)(3) for additional

information). To the greatest extent possible, these screening procedures must be sensitive to the child's cultural background.”

This regulation is implemented in a variety of ways by Head Start programs. The training and materials provided by PBA will assist Head Start programs in their efforts to conduct vision screenings in a consistent and accurate manner in order to meet this Head Start requirement.

Additional information on how to contact PBA regarding their resources, materials and training is available on the [PBA](#) web site.

/ Patricia E. Brown /

Patricia E. Brown
Acting Director
Office of Head Start