

**HIGHLAND RIM HEAD START PROGRAM
OBJECTIVE AND OPERATING PLAN
PROGRAM YEAR 2006-2007
SOCIAL SERVICES**

OBJECTIVE #1: To establish a comprehensive system to assist families in identifying family strengths and weaknesses and finding ways to aide the family in improving the quality of family life.

JUSTIFICATION AND APPROACH

Following Performance Standards 1304.40

The family service worker will make every effort to meet with the parent/guardian of each child enrolled in the program and together, they will identify the strengths and weaknesses within that family unit. At this time, the family will be provided with information to aide them in this process. The family service worker will assist the family in its own efforts to improve the condition of family life. The family service worker will make parents/guardians aware of the community services available to them.

When the family has a pre-existing plan through the Department of Human Services, every effort will be made to obtain said information and build on that plan.

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OBJECTIVE #1: To establish a comprehensive system for identifying strengths and weaknesses and finding ways to aid them in improving the quality of family life.

TASKS	BEGINNING DATE	COMPLETION DATE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
To complete Family Assessment at initial meeting and complete a family service plan.	August	June	FSW
Distribute at the time of enrollment Resource Directory and Parent Handbook.	August	March 31	FSW Education Staff
Social Service Staff will work with other components to insure delivery of needed services to Head Start families.	August	June	FSW
Serve as liaison between families and existing community resources, networking with other agencies for the benefit of families.	August	June	FSW
When applicable, the Social Service staff will work with the family to obtain the goals set on a preexisting family plan.	August	June	FSW

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OBJECTIVE #2: To maintain strong communication and cooperation between agencies and their community partners and to improve the delivery of community services to children and their families.

JUSTIFICATION AND APPROACH

Following Performance Standards 1304041 A & B

In order to maintain strong communication and cooperation among agencies, Highland Rim Head Start complies with the performance standards mandating that a certain percentage of the Policy Council members are representatives of the community. The program also maintains a **Health** Advisory Committee which includes professionals and volunteers from the community. Highland Rim Head Start has staff members who serve on committees, community boards, agencies, or councils where they would have the opportunity to deliver presentations about Head Start.

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OBJECTIVE #2: To maintain strong communication and cooperation between agencies and their community partners and to improve the delivery of community services to children and their families

TASKS	BEGINNING DATE	COMPLETION DATE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
To obtain the use of community representatives on policy council.	August	June	Head Start Director HREC Executive Director
To obtain use of community representatives on combined Health committee.	August	June	Central Staff

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OBJECTIVE #3: To determine the strengths and the weaknesses in the four county area which Highland Rim Head Start serves

JUSTIFICATION AND APPROACH

Following Performance Standards 1305.3 A-F and 1305.5 C

In order to obtain a clear assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the four county area which we serve, the staff at Highland Rim Head Start will conduct a survey, gathering information from several resources (i.e., parent questionnaires, the Internet, information from outreach programs, etc.) Information will include the following statistics:

- The demographic make up of the area
- Other child development and Child Care Facilities in the areas that serve children who could be eligible for Head Start as well as the number of eligible children they serve
- The estimated number of children with Disabilities and the resources available to them
- Data regarding education, health, nutrition, and Social Service needs of Head Start families
- Resources in the community that could be used to address these needs

The Community Assessment will be used to determine the short and long term objectives of the agency, the type of service needed, and the recruitment area as well as to determine which areas are in most need when determining growth.

The Community Assessment will also be used to set Criteria for which children will be given priority for recruitment and selection.

As the Community Assessment is to be updated every three years, during the following two years, an annual review will take place to determine any significant changes which would affect the type of service for the area. The Community Assessment will be updated and decisions for recruitment and eligibility will be made based on these changes.

Highland Rim Economic Corporation Head Start is funded to service a four county service area. Children ages 3-5 years, in the counties which have applied and qualify under the federal guidelines will be served as long as there are available slots. The program will serve a minimum of 10% special needs children.

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OBJECTIVE #3: To determine the strengths and the weaknesses in the four county area which Highland Rim Head Start serves.

TASKS	BEGINNING DATE	COMPLETION DATE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
To perform a community assessment every three years with annual updates of the four county area which we serve.	December	February 28	FSW Career Development Manager
To visit previous sites on the Internet	December	February 28	FSW Career Development Manager
To gather information from parent questionnaires	December	February	FSW Family Service Manager Career Development Manager
To obtain recent information from reliable sources in the community such as DHS, COC, etc.	December	February	FSW Family Service Manager

HIGHLAND RIM HEAD START PROGRAM

**OBJECTIVE AND OPERATING PLAN
PROGRAM YEAR 2006-2007
SOCIAL SERVICES**

OBJECTIVE #4: To maintain a Social Services recruitment process which will ensure full enrollment of eligible children regardless of race, creed, color, special needs, or national origin.

JUSTIFICATION AND APPROACH

Following performance Standards 1305.5

The Social Services Program for Highland Rim Head Start, as it pertains to recruitment and enrollment will consist of the following parts:

1. To establish/maintain an outreach and recruitment process that ensures enrollment of eligible children on a systematic basis.
2. To provide enrollment of eligible children regardless of race, sex, creed, color, national origin or special needs.
3. To work in cooperation with the Health/Disabilities Manager to ensure the recruitment of children with special needs.
4. To establish procedures for the distribution of recruitment materials to area health and social service agencies, churches and businesses, etc.
5. Establish a selection criteria to ensure the selection and enrollment of the most eligible children.

In order to ensure that all children in our four county area have an opportunity to benefit from a comprehensive child development program, all means of identification and recruitment will be utilized. Public awareness of the Head Start program and the recruitment process is a primary objective. Posters, radio announcements and newspaper articles will be utilized for public awareness in our community. Factories, local businesses, doctor's offices, health departments and the Department of Human Services will be supplied with information about recruiting process. All areas will be served in each county by designating specific areas for the recruitment/enrollment process. Although recruiting is the primary responsibility of the Social Service Staff, any available staff member can help take recruitment and can be a resource for interested persons.

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OBJECTIVE #4: To maintain a Social Service recruitment process which will ensure full enrollment of eligible children regardless of race, creed, special needs, or national origin.

Reference: 1305.7(b)

TASKS	BEGINNING DATE	COMPLETION DATE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Recruit eligible children for next program year.	July	June	FSW
Posters, flyers, and recruitment information will be distributed to area health and social service agencies, factories, day care centers, schools and area radio stations.	July	June	FSW
Using public assistance lists provided by Tennessee Department of Human Services, mail informational brochures and recruitment form for enrollment.	February	April	FSW
Recruitment and selection criteria will be entered into Child Plus to generate a waiting list.	July	June	FSW
Staff will discuss the importance of regular attendance and review the program policy on excessive absenteeism/ irregular attendance at the time of enrollment and at the initial home visit	August	June	FSW Education Staff

TASKS	BEGINNING DATE	COMPLETION DATE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Vacancies which occur prior to 60 days before the last day of the program year will be filled within thirty (30) days.	September	March 31	FSW
Review Policies and Procedures on attendance with Health Committee and submit recommended changes to Policy Council	April	May	Social Service Staff
Annual review of Enrollment Selection Criteria by Policy Council using data from the Community Needs Assessment.	April	May	FSW
Second year enrollees will complete enrollment packet.	March	May	FSW

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OBJECTIVE #5: To adhere to the performance standards concerning the areas of recruitment of children in the appropriate age group and income bracket. To follow the specifications that have been mandated in the performance standards in the area of the income status concerning a returning child as well as to maintaining the desired attendance of 85% enrollment.

JUSTIFICATION AND APPROACH

Following Performance Standards 1305.4, 1305.6,1305.7 and 1305.8

In order for a child to be eligible for Head Start services, he/she must be at least three years of age by the date used to determine eligibility for public school in the community. At least 90% of the families must be at or below the Health and Human Service Poverty Guidelines and proof of this must be provided. Examples of proof of income would be any of the following: Income tax form, Pay Stub, Pay Envelope, a written statement from employer, or documentation which states current status of Public Assistance.

The 2005 Health and Human Services (HHS) Poverty Guidelines are as follows:

Guidelines are updated yearly

Size of Family Unit	Guidelines
1	\$9,570
2	12,830
3	16,090
4	19,350
5	22,610
6	25,870
7	29,130
8	32,390
For each additional person, add \$3,260	

A Statement signed by Head Start Staff verifying proof of income will be maintained to indicate income verification has taken place.

At least 10% of the total number of enrollment opportunities must be made available to children with disabilities.

A waiting list will be compiled and maintained throughout the year using the selection criteria to ensure proper placement as vacancies become available.

A child enrolled in a Head Start program will be allowed to remain in Head Start until they become age eligible for Kindergarten.

When attendance falls below 85%, the agency must analyze the cause, document and maintain on file the reason for dropped attendance.

When a child is absent for three consecutive days or maintains a pattern of excessive absenteeism the staff must visit or have direct contact with the family emphasizing the benefits of regular attendance. All family contacts must be documented. If a child continues with chronic absenteeism his/her slot must be considered an open vacancy after the agency has tried to work with the family, being sensitive to any situation that may inhibit or contribute to poor attendance.

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TASKS	BEGINNING DATE	COMPLETION DATE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
To obtain copies of certified birth certificates in order to verify age of child before entering the program	July	June	FSW
To have on file proof of income and an income verification form signed by staff in each child's file	July	June	FSW
To ensure that at least 10% of the available slots are filled by children with special needs	July	June	FSW
To maintain a waiting list throughout the year based on Selection Criteria	July	June	FSW
To check attendance monthly, analyze and document when it falls below 85%	July	June	FSW
To have direct contact with the family when a child is absent for three consecutive days	July	June	FSW