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Community Assessment Matrix

The community assessment describes the context in which a Head Start and Early Head Start program operates and is useful for ensuring that the right services are provided to the right population. This resource can assist program staff in coordinating their efforts to gather information required for a community assessment. The assessment paints a picture of the community and describes the diverse needs of families who may receive services. In addition, the community assessment covers the community’s history, its economic and political scene, and the community’s strengths and challenges. Note: *Italicized items are required by the Determining community strengths, needs, and resources, [45 CFR §1302.11\(b\)\(1\) Subpart A](#).*

| “Triggers” for Data Collection (Customize this list and add information not listed. What do you want to know?) | Information Source (Who/What agency or resource can assist you in gathering the information you need for your community assessment?) | These columns can be completed by members of your team | | |
|---|---|--|----------------|----------------|
| | | Responsible CA Team Member | Date Initiated | Date Completed |
| General Area Description—Demographics | | | | |
| Proposed <i>service</i> area— Geographic boundaries (size, counties, distinguishing characteristics) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governing structure • Population and related trends • Racial and ethnic composition • Language spoken by families and children • Gender, ages • Household composition • Economic activities • Future trends • Median income level • Principle source of income • Number / percentage below poverty level | | | | |
| Head Start ELIGIBLE Children and Families | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Number of eligible infants, toddlers, preschool age children and expectant mothers o Geographic location o Race and ethnicity o Languages spoken o Number of children experiencing homelessness o Number of children in foster care o Household composition o Principle source of income | | | | |



| “Triggers” for Data Collection (Customize this list and add information not listed. What do you want to know?) | Information Source (Who/What agency or resource can assist you in gathering the information you need for your community assessment?) | These columns can be completed by members of your team | | |
|--|---|--|----------------|----------------|
| | | Responsible CA Team Member | Date Initiated | Date Completed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Median income level / employment o Number of children living below poverty level o Number of public assistance recipients o Number of children who are DLLs | | | | |
| Education Needs of Eligible Families | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Adult educational attainment • Drop-out rates • Information on functional literacy levels | | | | |
| Health and Social Service Needs of Eligible Families | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidence of child abuse and neglect • Reports of domestic violence • Number of children <i>with disabilities, including types of disabilities</i> • Rates of drug and alcohol abuse • Number of children born to addicted mothers • Infant and child death rates • Number of low-birth weight babies • Teen pregnancy rates • Number / percentage of women receiving prenatal healthcare • Immunization rates among school children • Prevalent health problems • Communicable diseases • Air and water quality | | | | |
| Nutrition Needs of Eligible Families | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number / percentage of children receiving free lunch and breakfast • Number / percentage of food stamp recipients • Number / percentage who participate in Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program participants | | | | |



| “Triggers” for Data Collection (Customize this list and add information not listed. What do you want to know?) | Information Source (Who/What agency or resource can assist you in gathering the information you need for your community assessment?) | These columns can be completed by members of your team | | |
|---|---|--|----------------|----------------|
| | | Responsible CA Team Member | Date Initiated | Date Completed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number / percentage who participate in food distribution programs • Availability of low-cost food | | | | |
| Housing and Homelessness | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcrowding / availability • Affordability • Conditions • HUD housing • Utilities • Homeless count • Mobility • Other prevalent social or economic factors | | | | |
| Child Care Availability | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of child development centers, child care centers, and family child care programs, including home visiting, publicly funded state and local preschool programs • Approximate number of Head Start-eligible children served in identified programs • Number or percent of working mothers • Typical work, school, or training schedules | | | | |
| Transportation and Communication | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle ownership • Relevant aspects of road conditions, climate, and weather relating to jobs, services, and isolation • Availability as in jobs, services, and isolation of public transportation services • Percentage of population with telephones / cell phones / televisions / computers | | | | |
| Resources Available to Address Needs of Eligible Children and Families | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social services and mental health services • Health, dental health, and nutrition resources • Disability services and resources | | | | |



| “Triggers” for Data Collection (Customize this list and add information not listed. What do you want to know?) | Information Source (Who/What agency or resource can assist you in gathering the information you need for your community assessment?) | These columns can be completed by members of your team | | |
|--|---|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| | | Responsible CA Team Member | Date Initiated | Date Completed |
| Community Strengths | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive community attributes | | | | |
| Head Start ENROLLED Children and Families | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment area • Center location • Number and location of enrolled children • Ages of enrolled children • Tribal / racial/ethnic composition of enrolled children • Number of enrolled children who are DLLs • Attendance/waiting lists / over-income children • Parent involvement and recruitment experience • Number of foster children enrolled • Number of homeless children enrolled • Number of enrolled children with disabilities • Types of disabilities (by diagnostic category) of enrolled children • Resources provided to enrolled children with disabilities by other agencies | | | | |
| Head Start Staff | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial, ethnic, tribal composition • Languages spoken • Educational attainment | | | | |
| Relevant Opinions of Community Needs | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opinions of parents • Prevalent community problems • Knowledge of existing resources • Accessibility of available resources • Adequacy of services provided by existing resources • Additional resources needed • Opinions of community leaders / institutions | | | | |

Community Assessment Annual Update

The Head Start Program Performance Standards require programs to review and update the community assessment annually to reflect any significant changes including increased availability of publicly-funded pre-kindergarten (including an assessment of how the pre-kindergarten available in the community meets the needs of the parents and children served by the program, and whether it is offered full school day), rates of family and child homelessness, and significant shifts in community demographics and resources. Determining community strengths, needs, and resources, [45 CFR §1302.11\(b\)\(2\) Subpart A](#).

Source: Adapted from AIAN Region QIC Resource



ADMINISTRATION FOR
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Community Assessment Report Checklist

Assess to what extent your community assessment report is complete, well-organized, and readable. Teams can use the tool to help ensure the quality of the community assessment report and as a discussion guide. It lists items that should appear in the report, including text, maps, and charts. When you ask staff or the governing body to review your community assessment report, they can use the checklist and provide you with feedback.

If checklist items are missing or incomplete, the team should take note and try to make corrections. At some point, you might want to include additional items on the checklist that you know are important indicators of the quality of your community assessment report.

Grantee/Delegate Agency: _____

Name of Reader: _____

Check the “yes” box if the item is included in the community assessment report. Check “no” if it is missing entirely or incomplete. Page references may be noted. If the information/data are located in another section of the community assessment report, indicate those page numbers.

| | Yes | No | Page No. | Notes: |
|--|-----|----|----------|--------|
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | | | | |
| 1-2 pages in length | | | | |
| Overview of the grantee and communities in the service area | | | | |
| Summary of the community assessment process (e.g., data gathering and data analysis) | | | | |
| Major findings | | | | |
| Recommendations (prioritized) | | | | |
| OVERVIEW OF STATE OF THE GRANTEE | | | | |
| Relevant information, details, and maps | | | | |
| Grantee type, history, and other programs administered | | | | |
| Delegate agencies (if applicable) | | | | |
| Eligibility criteria specified | | | | |
| Number of eligible children and families to be served according to the Notice of Award | | | | |
| Actual number of enrolled children and families including cultural and linguistic features | | | | |
| Program options offered | | | | |



| | Yes | No | Page No. | Notes: |
|--|-----|----|----------|--------|
| Locations of centers, family child care, homes, central office, and other offices | | | | |
| Service Area Maps | | | | |
| Service area | | | | |
| Recruitment area | | | | |
| Location of delegate agencies and programs | | | | |
| Location of communities and population groups | | | | |
| METHODOLOGY | | | | |
| Purpose of the community assessment | | | | |
| Community Assessment Process | | | | |
| List of community assessment team members, their responsibilities, and how they were selected indicating that they were a cross-representational group | | | | |
| Role of a consultant, if used | | | | |
| Overview of any training provided to the community assessment team | | | | |
| Roles of the Policy Council and the governing board | | | | |
| Timeline or other evidence indicating that there was ongoing reporting of the community assessment progress | | | | |
| Sources for the Community Assessment Information | | | | |
| Internal data sources (include a list if possible) | | | | |
| External data sources in the community (include a list if possible) | | | | |
| Census data or other population figures | | | | |
| Data sources on underserved or new or emerging populations (include a list if possible) | | | | |
| Methods of Data Collection | | | | |
| Surveys and/or questionnaires (specify the intended population) | | | | |
| Interviews and/or focus groups (specify the intended population) | | | | |
| Use of translation or interpreters when necessary | | | | |
| Methods of Data Analyses | | | | |
| Quantitative analyses (e.g., percentages) | | | | |



| | Yes | No | Page No. | Notes: |
|--|-----|----|----------|--------|
| Qualitative analyses (e.g., quotes from interviews) | | | | |
| Estimates and trends | | | | |
| DATA COLLECTED AND FINDINGS | | | | |
| Overview of the Service Area and Recruitment Areas | | | | |
| Employment patterns, noting major businesses and industries | | | | |
| Housing patterns | | | | |
| Public school patterns | | | | |
| Transportation patterns | | | | |
| Medical and environmental health issues | | | | |
| Social and economic status of population | | | | |
| Language and cultural base of population | | | | |
| Racial and ethnic characteristics of population | | | | |
| Recent population changes including immigration, new or emerging populations | | | | |
| Types and locations of child care programs and arrangements for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers | | | | |
| Types and locations of child care programs and arrangements for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with disabilities | | | | |
| National, state, and local census data whenever possible | | | | |
| Information and Demographics on Head Start-Eligible Children and Their Families including New, Emerging, and Underserved Populations | | | | |
| Housing | | | | |
| Social and economic status | | | | |
| Languages and cultures | | | | |
| Racial and ethnic characteristics | | | | |
| Recent population changes | | | | |
| Foster care statistics | | | | |
| Children with disabilities | | | | |
| Types of disabilities | | | | |
| Enrollments in non-Head Start child development programs | | | | |
| Data sources cited and referenced | | | | |
| Charts, tables, and other visual displays of data | | | | |



| | Yes | No | Page No. | Notes: |
|---|-----|----|----------|--------|
| Strengths and Needs of Head Start-Eligible Children and Families as Defined by the Head Start Program | | | | |
| Education | | | | |
| Disabilities services | | | | |
| Foster care | | | | |
| Health and mental health | | | | |
| Nutrition | | | | |
| Social services | | | | |
| Housing | | | | |
| Employment | | | | |
| Transportation | | | | |
| Translation and interpretation services | | | | |
| Other | | | | |
| Comparison of Strengths and Needs of Head Start-Eligible Children and Families as Defined by the Families Themselves and Local Institutions Serving Them | | | | |
| Education | | | | |
| Disabilities services | | | | |
| Foster care | | | | |
| Health and mental health | | | | |
| Nutrition | | | | |
| Social services | | | | |
| Housing | | | | |
| Employment | | | | |
| Transportation | | | | |
| Translation and interpretation services | | | | |
| Other | | | | |
| Access and Availability of Community Resources | | | | |
| Education | | | | |
| Disabilities services | | | | |
| Foster care | | | | |
| Health and mental health | | | | |
| Nutrition | | | | |
| Social services | | | | |
| Housing | | | | |
| Employment | | | | |
| Transportation | | | | |
| Translation and interpretation services | | | | |
| Collaborative Arrangements, Partnerships, and Formal Agreements | | | | |
| Disabilities services | | | | |
| Educational services | | | | |
| Health and mental health services | | | | |



| | Yes | No | Page No. | Notes: |
|---|-----|----|----------|--------|
| Social services | | | | |
| Shared facilities | | | | |
| Transportation | | | | |
| Professional development | | | | |
| DATA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS | | | | |
| Charts, tables, and other visual displays of data | | | | |
| Changes from prior years in service and recruitment areas and eligibility and enrollment indicating trends and patterns | | | | |
| Program Information Report (PIR) data, especially enrollment data, analyzed over several years | | | | |
| Agency PIR data compared to national | | | | |
| PIR data | | | | |
| Data analyzed for significance and impact on the Head Start children and families, the program, and the community | | | | |
| Major Issues, Trends, and Concerns | | | | |
| Changes in social policy or legislation, such as eligibility criteria for federal or state benefits | | | | |
| Influx or relocation of new or emerging populations | | | | |
| Community development projects | | | | |
| Business and services closings and openings | | | | |
| Residential patterns, new construction | | | | |
| Immigration laws and law enforcement | | | | |
| Unseasonable weather or natural disaster | | | | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRIORITIES | | | | |
| Key issues facing eligible children and families to be addressed by the Head Start program | | | | |
| Recommendations prioritized and rationale given for: | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term goals and measurable objectives | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services and program options | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment area for grantee | | | | |

| | Yes | No | Page No. | Notes: |
|---|-----|----|----------|--------|
| • Recruitment area for each delegate, if applicable | | | | |
| • Locations for centers and home-based programs | | | | |
| • Criteria for recruitment and selection | | | | |
| Financial implications of recommendations | | | | |
| Priority assigned to serving new, emerging, or underserved populations identified during the community assessment | | | | |
| STYLE AND FORMAT OF COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT REPORT | | | | |
| Written in a logical, organized way | | | | |
| Table of contents included | | | | |
| Thorough and detailed | | | | |
| Contains maps, charts, and illustrations for clarity | | | | |
| Provides numerical data that are easy to understand and summarize the information | | | | |
| Provides qualitative data, such as quotes from interviews that are insightful and make the report interesting | | | | |
| Offers conclusions supported by the data | | | | |
| Responds to question: How can Head Start ensure the correct services are provided to the appropriate population? | | | | |

For Internal Use Only

Date: _____

Based on the review of the above elements, the community assessment report:

- Includes all the key elements and is acceptable
- Lacks information and needs revision of content
- Is poorly organized or written and needs rewriting

Comments:



Community Assessment Analysis Worksheet

The community assessment process is part of program planning. It is used as a basis for making decisions, as a foundation for establishing long-term goals and measurable objectives, and to inform strategic and ongoing planning. Your community assessment team can use this worksheet while collecting and reviewing data and developing recommendations. As you go through the community assessment process, ask the questions posed in the worksheet:

| | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT PROCESS REVIEW | | |
| Does our process include: | | |
| 1. Information collection and analysis of: | | |
| A. Demographics, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Eligible infants, toddlers, preschool-age children, and expectant mothers? b. Children experiencing homelessness? c. Children in foster care? d. Children with disabilities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Types of disabilities? ii. Relevant services provided by community agencies? iii. Resources provided by community agencies? | | |
| B. Needs of eligible children and their families for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Education? b. Health? c. Nutrition? d. Social Services? | | |
| C. Schedules of parents with eligible children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Work? b. School? c. Training? | | |
| D. Other child development programs serving eligible children, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Child care centers? b. Family child care programs? c. Public pre-K programs? d. Home visiting programs? | | |
| E. Resources available in the community? | | |
| F. Strengths of the community? | | |
| 2. Identification of trends? | | |
| 3. An annual review and update to the community assessment, and the undertaking of a new community assessment every five years? | | |
| 4. The effective integration of the community assessment process and data into ongoing program planning? | | |



| COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT TRENDS | | |
|---|--|--|
| What trends do we see in: | | |
| Demographic makeup of the service area? | | |
| Demographic makeup of eligible children and families, including those who are experiencing homelessness, those in foster care, and those with disabilities? | | |
| Number and types of disabilities and related resources? | | |
| Education needs of eligible children and families? | | |
| Health needs of eligible children and families? | | |
| Nutrition needs of eligible children and families? | | |
| Social service needs of eligible children and families? | | |
| Schedules of parents with eligible children? | | |
| Other child development programs? | | |
| Community resources? | | |
| Community strengths and needs? | | |

| IMPACT OF COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT TRENDS | |
|---|--|
| How do the community assessment trends impact our: | |
| Long-term goals and measurable objectives? | |
| Program options and locations? | |
| Program calendar? | |
| Target recruitment areas? | |
| Enrollment priorities? | |
| Collaborative relationships and partnerships? | |

| COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATIONS | |
|--|--|
| What recommendations do we have for our: | |
| Recruitment and selection criteria? | |
| Long-term goals and measurable objectives? | |
| Organizational development and design? | |
| Financial objectives? | |
| Collaborative relationships and partnerships? | |
| Workforce needs and staff development? | |
| Possible change of location or identification of new facilities? | |

| IMPACT OF COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATIONS | |
|---|--|
| How do our recommendations impact our: | |
| Strategic plan? | |
| Ongoing monitoring activities? | |
| Coordinated approaches? | |
| Budget? | |
| TA and staff development plans? | |
| Organizational development plan? | |



Identifying Data and Data-Based Decisions Worksheet

Complete this worksheet as your team prepares the community assessment report. Follow the steps below:

1. List the discoveries identified through internal and external data collection.
2. Identify the source or data-gathering techniques, such as surveys and focus groups.
3. Note where the data have supported a recommendation in the community assessment report.
4. If your analysis indicates a decision was made without supporting evidence, then go back to find supporting evidence or reconsider your decision.

| Evidence | | Types of Decisions Required by Head Start Regulations Based on Community Assessment Data | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Data Discovery from Internal or External Data | Data Collection Technique or Source | Strategic Long-Term Goals and Measurable Objectives | Program Options and Calendar | Recruitment Areas and Program Locations | Recruitment, Selection Criteria, and Enrollment Priorities | Services and Coordinated Approaches | Collaborative Partnerships |
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Data Collection Sources by Topic Worksheet

Data collection and analysis is the foundation of the community assessment. Review the following categories and demographic elements as data collection is being planned. This will help you identify what data you wish to collect as well as with the design of worksheets and choice of data collection methodologies. At the end of this list, find a sample template for a worksheet you can use to document your data collection.

As you review the categories and demographic elements listed and embark on the data collection process, keep these important points in mind:

- You do not have to collect information for each item listed. Select the ones that will be useful and help you understand your program and your community.
- Depending on the data source, data may be reported in different ways. There is no right or wrong way to report the data.
- Sometimes you can find data broken down by race, gender, age, or location. If this information is helpful to you, use it. For example, census information on the workforce may be broken down according to race and school districts may be able to give you information about the home languages most commonly spoken in the pre-kindergarten classes. If you think such detailed information will help your program identify and serve eligible families, include this information on your worksheet for your community assessment.

| Categories | Demographic Elements to Consider | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| General Demographics | Total population | 0–3 years old | 3–5 years old | 18 years and older | Median age (years) |
| | Race | Hispanic or Latino | Household population | Average household size | Average family size |
| | Owner occupied housing | Renter occupied housing | Subsidized units | | |
| Social Demographics | High school graduate or higher | Bachelor’s degree or higher | High school dropout | 0–3 years with disabilities | 3–5 years with disabilities |
| | Foreign born | Teenage parents | Enrolled in adult education | Dual language learners | Homeless families with children |



| Categories | Demographic Elements to Consider | | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|---|--|--|
| Economic Demographics | In labor force: 16 years or older | In job training: 16 years or older | Median house hold income | Per capita income | Families below poverty level |
| | Families below poverty level | Families below poverty level with 0–3-year-olds | Families below poverty level with 3–5-year-olds | Female-headed (single parent) households with children | Male-headed (single parent) households with children |
| | Grandparent-headed households with children | Individuals below poverty level | | | |
| Health | Births | Low birth weight infants | Born to single teen | | |
| | Child deaths | 0–3-year-olds who are immunized | 3–5-year-olds who are immunized | Children and teens overweight or obese | Children with asthma |
| | Prevalence rates of infection, communicable diseases, diabetes for children and families low-income families | Smokers 16 and older | Pediatricians who accept low-income families | PA/NP/CNM | Medical clinics |
| | Hospitals | Without health insurance | With SCHIP | Seek emergency care 5 years and under | Cultural attitudes and perceptions affecting health |
| | Availability of interpreters | Availability of transportation to services | Environmental factors such as water quality, non-use of seat belts, lead toxicity, etc. | | |
| Mental Health | Mental health providers who serve low-income families | Mental health clinics or other treatment centers | Parent education programs | Prevalence rate of depression | Households with substance abuse |
| | Cases of reported child abuse and neglect | Households with domestic violence | Incarcerated individuals | Cultural attitudes and perceptions affecting mental health | Bilingual staff |
| | Availability of transportation to services | | | | |



| Categories | Demographic Elements to Consider | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| Dental Health | Dentists who serve low-income families | Dental clinics | Households with fluoride in water | Prevalence rate of cavities in 0–3-year-olds | Prevalence rate of cavities in 3–5-year-olds |
| | Cultural attitudes and perceptions affecting dental health | Availability of interpreters | Bilingual staff | Availability of transportation to services | |
| Disabilities | 0–3-year-olds with disabilities | 3–5-year-olds with disabilities | Prevalence rates of different disabilities for children 5 and under | Prevalence rates of different disabilities served by school system | Early intervention programs |
| | Cultural attitudes and perceptions about disabilities | Availability of interpreters | Bilingual staff | Availability of transportation to services | |
| Nutrition | Enrolled in Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) | Receiving food stamps | Served by food banks or other food programs | Mothers who breast fed | Households preferring ethnic cooking |
| | Local supermarkets | Fast food places | # and type of ethnic food markets | Availability of transportation for services and food shopping | |
| Child Care and Early Education Programs | Child care centers and early education programs | Low-income 0–3-year-olds served in CC/EEP | Low-income 3–5-year-olds served in CC/EEP | Children 5 years and under experiencing homelessness served in child care programs | 3-year-olds served in state-funded pre-K |
| | 4–5-year-olds served in state-funded pre-K | Low-income 0–3-year-olds served in family child care programs | Low-income 3–5-year-olds served in child care programs | Low-income 3–5-year-olds in kith and kin care | Child care programs providing transportation |
| | Average hours of child care program operations | Availability of interpreters | Bilingual staff | | |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|--|---|--|--|
| Transportation | Eligible children provided transportation | Eligible children not provided transportation | Eligible children not provided transportation but may have used it if available | Children who dropped out of Head Start due to lack of transportation | Availability of transportation for 0–3-year-olds with disabilities |
| | Availability of transportation for 3–5-year-olds with disabilities | Availability of transportation provided by school districts with Head Start children | Partnership with community organizations (e.g., child care, coordinated transportation providers, human service agencies) to provide transportation | Participation with local Transportation Coordination Council (If no, will there be participation in establishing a council?) | Training for transportation staff |
| Community Resources | Libraries | Book stores (adult and children) | Museums (activities for infants–5-year-olds) | Agencies providing literacy education for dual language learners | 3-year-olds served in state-funded pre-K |
| | Recreational centers | Cultural centers (specify) | Thrift stores | Services that support the inclusion of fathers | Family support services |
| | Family preservation programs | Senior support services | Crisis assistance programs (e.g., domestic violence shelters) | Legal services | Employment services (e.g., pre-employment prep, workplace literacy programs) |



Sample Template for Data Collection

Date: _____

Check the data collection topic:

- General Demographics
- Social Demographics
- Economic Demographics

- Health
- Mental Health
- Dental Health

- Disabilities
- Nutrition
- Other: _____

Other: _____
 Other: _____
 Other: _____

| Data Source (Specify) | No., Percent, or Yes or No | Comments |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------|
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Preparing a Survey or Questionnaire

There are advantages to using a survey or written questionnaire to collect certain kinds of community assessment data. It can be administered easily, reach many people and ask for specific information. The simplest type of question asks for a yes or no response. For example, a survey question for parents might be: Did you use any legal services this year? There are other ways of asking questions that many Head Start programs have used, including a rating scale, a rank order and a root and contingency method. You may find that a combination of these types of questions will elicit the information you need.

Rating Scale

Sometimes referred to as a Likert scale, a 5-point scale is often used to collect data. In the example in Table 1, responses range from (1) very satisfied to (5) not satisfied. Scales can be used to gather opinions about the quality of the Head Start services. For example, one program asked formerly enrolled families to express their opinion about the services for children and for families in order to assess where the program needed to improve their service delivery.

Check the appropriate box to show how satisfied were you with the Head Start services you received.

Table 1.

| Children's Services | Very Satisfied | Somewhat Satisfied | Satisfied | Somewhat Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | Service Not Used |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Information about my child's progress | | | | | | |
| Classroom program | | | | | | |
| Hearing | | | | | | |
| Dental exams | | | | | | |
| Vision services | | | | | | |



Rank Order

In this case, the respondent puts the answers in order where 1 = first choice, 2 = second choice, and so on. The advantage to this approach is that more information is gained than from a yes or no response. For example, a Head Start program might ask current and not enrolled Head Start-eligible parents a question about which preschool options they prefer; in addition, Head Start staff could be asked their opinion about which preschool options would be most helpful to families. The responses from families and staff can guide decision-making about Head Start program options, partnering with other child care institutions, or using additional funding streams to meet families' needs.

| Preschool Options | Rating |
|---|--------|
| Full day (open 6 hours or more, M–F, Sept. to May) | |
| Half-day (open for 3.5 hours either morning or afternoon, M–Th, Sept. to May) | |
| Wraparound (open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., M–F, full year) | |
| Home-based (a home visitor visits the home once per week for 1.5 hours; twice a month there is a socialization activity with other families; full year) | |

Root and Contingency

With this method, a respondent is asked a general question (the root). Then, detailed questions (the contingencies) are asked based on the initial response. For example, respondents are asked whether their family has needed or used health and human service assistance, and the barriers they experience in seeking help. First, respondents answer the root question (A): whether they or their families needed a service in the past year.

| | A In the past year have you or anyone in your family needed... | | B If you found help, did you have transportation to get to it? | | C If you found help, did it feel comfortable? | | D If you found help, did you use the services you found? | |
|--|--|----|---|----|--|----|---|----|
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| <i>Please check the correct box</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Income assistance; for example, welfare, SSI, unemployment insurance | | | | | | | | |
| Legal assistance; for example, immigration, custody | | | | | | | | |

If they answered yes, they are asked three subsequent contingency questions: (B) whether they had transportation to access the service they needed; (C) whether the help they sought felt comfortable; and (D) whether they used the services they found.



Sample Head Start Parent Survey

Data Collection: Preschool Head Start Parent Survey

This survey is being completed by:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father | <input type="checkbox"/> White |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother | <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African American |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Both parents | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guardian | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Native American |
| (Relationship: _____) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (_____) |

Name of Head Start Program _____

| Directions: Check Yes or No | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. The location of my Head Start center was convenient for my family's participation. | | |
| 2. The Head Start program provided transportation for my child. | | |
| 3. Information provided by Head Start included materials for both fathers and mothers. | | |
| 4. The current program schedule met the needs of my family | | |
| 5. Our family's needs would be better served with a 12-month Head Start program. | | |
| 6. Our family's needs would be better served with a five-day per week | | |
| 7. Our family's needs would be better served with an eight- to 10-hour per day Head Start program. | | |

| Directions: Check the box that best describes how you feel about the following statements | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Don't know |
|---|-------|---------|----------|------------|
| 8. I am satisfied with the Head Start services my family receives from: | | | | |
| a. Classroom staff | | | | |
| b. Administration | | | | |
| c. Family service providers | | | | |
| d. Health staff | | | | |
| 9. Head Start has helped my child get ready for school by: | | | | |
| a. Becoming more independent | | | | |
| b. Learning basic concepts in language | | | | |
| c. Learning basic concepts in math | | | | |
| d. Learning to share and cooperate | | | | |



| Directions: Check the box that best describes how you feel about the following statements | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Don't know |
|---|-------|---------|----------|------------|
| 10. Head Start gives my child a: | | | | |
| a. Safe place to learn | | | | |
| b. Clean environment | | | | |
| 11. Head Start provides me with quality information through: | | | | |
| a. Newsletters | | | | |
| b. Parent handbook | | | | |
| c. Parent-teacher conferences and home visits | | | | |
| d. Monthly calendars | | | | |
| e. Home visits with family service providers | | | | |
| f. Website and electronic messaging | | | | |
| g. Flyers announcing upcoming events | | | | |
| 12. Head Start has told me about how to be involved with: | | | | |
| a. Policy Council | | | | |
| b. Parent committee | | | | |
| c. Classroom volunteering | | | | |
| d. Program events and family gatherings | | | | |
| e. Fatherhood events | | | | |
| 13. Head Start has provided me with informational support regarding: | | | | |
| a. Child development | | | | |
| b. Community resources | | | | |
| c. Personal relationships | | | | |
| d. Disabilities | | | | |
| e. Mental health | | | | |
| f. Health and dental health | | | | |
| 14. Head Start has enabled me to: | | | | |
| a. Define my own life goals | | | | |
| b. Accomplish and pursue my goals | | | | |
| c. Understand and carry out my role as the primary educator for my child | | | | |
| 15. My child's teacher: | | | | |
| a. Worked with me to plan my child's learning and development | | | | |
| b. Planned activities around my child's individual needs | | | | |
| c. Helped me have a better understanding of my child's social and emotional development | | | | |
| 16. When I requested help for my child's social and emotional development, it was: | | | | |
| a. Delivered in a timely matter | | | | |

| Directions: Check the box that best describes how you feel about the following statements | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Don't know |
|---|-------|---------|----------|------------|
| b. Useful and successful | | | | |
| c. Supportive of my family's values | | | | |
| 17. Head Start centers are friendly and inviting for fathers | | | | |
| 18. Head Start has provided me with information on disabilities. (Circle Yes or No. If No, go to question 20.) | Yes | | No | |
| 19. When I requested help for my child's disabilities, the services were: | | | | |
| a. Delivered in a timely matter | | | | |
| b. Useful and successful | | | | |
| c. Supportive of my family's values | | | | |
| 20. My child attends child care before or after Head Start. (Circle Yes or No.) | Yes | | No | |
| 21. There was turnover in the people working with my child and family this year (e.g., teachers, assistant teachers, bus driver, family service providers). (Circle Yes or No.) | Yes | | No | |

| Directions: Check the box that best describes how you feel about the following statement. | Negative | Somewhat Negative | Neutral | Somewhat Positive | Positive |
|---|----------|-------------------|---------|-------------------|----------|
| 22. This turnover had what type of effect on my family's experience: | | | | | |

23. My family's biggest stressors this year were: (Check all that apply)

- My child's disabilities
 Educational or Job Training
 Employment
 Financial
 Housing
 Marital or Personal
 Medical and Dental
 Mental Health
 Transportation
 Other

24. My biggest concern for my family at this time is:

25. Other comments I have:





Sample Early Head Start Parent Survey

Data Collection: Early Head Start Parent Survey

This survey is being completed by:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father | <input type="checkbox"/> White |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother | <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African American |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Both parents | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guardian | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Native American |
| (Relationship: _____) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (_____) |

Name of Head Start Program _____ -

| Directions: Check Yes or No | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Our home visitor consistently tries to schedule visits at a convenient time for our family. | | |
| 2. The current home-based services meet the needs of our family. | | |
| 3. Early Head Start (EHS) provides information and activities both for mothers and fathers. | | |
| 4. Our family attends group socialization two times a month. If not, why? | | |
| 5. Our family would prefer a combination of two or three home visits per month with a toddler class two or three times a week. | | |
| 6. Our family's needs would be better served with a six- to eight-hour per day EHS child care program. | | |
| 7. Our family would benefit from availability of an opening in a family day care home that meets the Head Start Program Performance Standards. | | |
| 8. EHS staff have assisted us/our child in staying current with well child exams and finding a dentist. | | |

| Directions: Check the box that best describes how you feel about the following statements. | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Don't know |
|--|-------|---------|----------|------------|
| 9. I am satisfied with the Head Start services my family receives: | | | | |
| a. In our home visits | | | | |
| b. At family gatherings | | | | |
| c. At parent meetings | | | | |
| d. Overall services of EHS program | | | | |
| 10. EHS services have helped me better understand: | | | | |
| a. My child's social and emotional development | | | | |
| b. My child's language development | | | | |



| Directions: Check the box that best describes how you feel about the following statements. | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Don't know |
|--|-------|---------|----------|------------|
| c. How my child learns concepts (e.g., shapes, sizes, etc.) | | | | |
| d. My child's motor development | | | | |
| 11. The EHS classroom gives my child a: | | | | |
| a. Safe place to learn | | | | |
| b. Clean environment | | | | |
| 12. My EHS family educator (home visitor) provides me with quality information through: | | | | |
| a. Discussions during weekly home visits | | | | |
| b. Written information and handouts | | | | |
| c. Parent handbook | | | | |
| d. Monthly calendars | | | | |
| e. Flyers announcing upcoming events | | | | |
| f. Information on a parent bulletin board in the classroom | | | | |
| g. Online resources | | | | |
| 13. EHS has told me about how to be involved with: | | | | |
| a. Policy Council | | | | |
| b. Program events and family gatherings | | | | |
| c. Volunteer opportunities | | | | |
| d. Parent meetings | | | | |
| e. Fatherhood events | | | | |
| f. Community events | | | | |
| 14. EHS has provided our family with helpful information regarding: | | | | |
| a. Child development | | | | |
| b. Community resources | | | | |
| c. Health and dental health | | | | |
| d. Mental health issues and services | | | | |
| e. Crisis assistance | | | | |
| f. Services for our child who has some developmental delays | | | | |
| 15. EHS has enabled me to: | | | | |
| a. Define my own life goals | | | | |
| b. Accomplish and pursue my goals | | | | |
| c. Understand and carry out my role as the primary educator for my child | | | | |
| 16. My child's home visitor: | | | | |
| a. Consistently includes me in planning for the next home visit | | | | |



| Directions: Check the box that best describes how you feel about the following statements. | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Don't know |
|--|-------|---------|----------|------------|
| b. Plans activities around my child's individual needs | | | | |
| c. Helped me have a better understanding of my child's social and emotional development | | | | |
| 17. When I requested help for my child's social and emotional development, it was: | | | | |
| a. Delivered in a timely manner | | | | |
| b. Useful and successful | | | | |
| c. Supportive of my family values | | | | |
| 18. When I requested help for my child's disabilities, the services were: | | | | |
| a. Delivered in a timely matter | | | | |
| b. Useful and successful | | | | |
| c. Helpful in educating and supporting me as my child's primary advocate | | | | |
| 19. EHS services have helped me: | | | | |
| a. Feel more comfortable talking to my child's health care provider | | | | |
| b. Better understand the importance of early dental care | | | | |
| d. Be more aware of the relationship I have with my child | | | | |
| e. Understand the importance of reading to my child as much as possible | | | | |

21. My family's biggest stressors this year were: (Check all that apply)

- My child's disabilities
 Educational or Job Training
 Employment
 Financial
 Housing
 Marital or Personal
 Medical or Dental
 Mental Health
 Transportation
 Other

22. My biggest concern for my family at this time is:

23. Other comments I have:

24. What I like most about the group socialization is:

25. What I like most about the parent meetings is:

26. Other comments I have:



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Sample Community Partner Survey

Data Collection: Early Head Start Parent Survey

Our Head Start/Early Head Start program is currently conducting its annual community assessment, which looks at the available local services and the services we provide to families. We are asking you to please take a minute to complete this brief questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed envelope.

| County | Community | Agency |
|--------|-----------|--------|
| | | |

Contact Information

| Name | Phone | Email |
|------|-------|-------|
| | | |

1. In the last year, has your agency seen changes in the following:

| | Increase | Decrease | No Change | Comments |
|--|----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Average household income | | | | |
| Number of low-income families contacting your agency | | | | |
| Number of individuals or families slightly over your income guidelines | | | | |
| Number of multigenerational families you serve | | | | |
| Number of female head of households | | | | |
| Number of teen pregnancies | | | | |
| Number of licensed child care providers | | | | |
| Job availability in community | | | | |
| Substance misuse in community | | | | |
| Low-income housing availability | | | | |
| Homelessness | | | | |
| Transportation needs | | | | |
| Services you offer | | | | |

2. Are your services free? NA Yes No
3. If No to Question 2: Are your fees based on income? Yes No
4. If Yes to Question 3: Do you have a sliding scale based on income? Yes No
5. What do you believe are your agency's and community's strengths when working with low-income families?

6. What do you believe are your agency's and community's obstacles when working with low-income families?

7. Are there other concerns you think are issues for our community?

8. What other programs or services do you believe our Head Start and Early Head Start program could offer to better serve our community (e.g., mental health or elderly services)?

9. Do you have suggestions about how Head Start and Early Head Start could collaborate or partner with your agency or community in order to better meet the needs of low-income children and families?

10. Other comments





Conducting Focus Groups and Large-Group Discussions

FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups are small-group discussions led by a trained facilitator. They are structured to surface opinions and perspectives that are representative of a particular demographic group. Focus groups have a number of benefits; but like all information-gathering techniques, they have their downside as well. For instance, while focus groups can be quick to set up and conduct, the information they yield will be skewed if you don't carefully select group participants.

Focus groups are most useful when you:

- Are assessing needs in your community
- Are considering introducing a new service
- Want to evaluate various aspects of a current service or group of services
- Feel that face-to-face engagement with stakeholders will add richness and credibility to your overall data-gathering effort
- Have access to a skilled, neutral facilitator
- Know how to recruit a group of participants that reflects the diverse opinions of the intended demographic
- Need to gather information quickly and inexpensively
- Have a staff member or volunteer who can take extensive notes during the focus group, or record the focus group and transcribe the notes afterward
- Have a small team of individuals, not all of whom were present at the group, to analyze notes, identify themes, and develop conclusions

Finally, before you decide on conducting a focus group, ask yourself what you want to find out that can't be discovered some other way. What nuances in perspective and opinion make a focus group desirable? Going in with a very clear idea of what you want to achieve will improve your chances of success.

Planning a Focus Group

Special considerations:

- **Select participants carefully.** Choose a narrow group of stakeholders and within that group, invite people likely to have a variety of opinions. Not everyone should love your services, and not everyone should be a critic. You want a genuine mix of people. This is especially true if you are conducting only one or two focus groups. Ideally, focus groups include no more than 10 participants each. If your stakeholders comprise many different racial, ethnic, language, or socioeconomic subgroups, you may need up to half a dozen or more focus groups to cover the entire range of stakeholder opinion.
- **Decide about incentives.** Focus groups can be inexpensive to run, particularly if you already have access to a skilled facilitator. But you do need to consider how, or if, you will compensate participants for attending. You may give participants a small cash stipend or gift certificate, or they may simply be happy to share snacks or a meal. Either way, make sure they know in advance what's being offered.
- **Settle on the details.** What day, time, and place works best to ensure the people you want to attend are able to participate? Consider the length of the focus group; 90 minutes is ideal for most groups. Ensure accessibility. For example, will you need a translator? Will you need to offer child care? How about transportation?

- **Prepare your questions.** Focus group questions are usually opened-ended and intended to stimulate thought and conversation. The following suggestions come from the Center for Community Health and Development's Community Tool Box:
 - "What are some of your thoughts about what's going on now?"
 - "What are you satisfied about?" "Why is that?" (Or, "What's going well?")
 - "Are there things you would like to see changed?" (Or, "What's not going well?") "What are they?" "Why is that?" "How should they change?"
 - "What kinds of things would you like to see happen?"
 - "How about this particular aspect (of the topic)? What do you think about that?"
 - "Some people have said that one way to improve X is to do Y. Do you agree with this?" (Or, "How do you feel about that?")
 - "Are there other recommendations that you have, or suggestions you would like to make?"
 - "What haven't we covered?" (Or, "What else is important for you to say before we wind up?")

Recruit participants. Personal outreach works best. Ask colleagues, friends and friends of friends for help in reaching out to stakeholders who don't normally attend meetings and make their opinions known. This is where some of your richest and most interesting information will come from.

Conducting the Group

The facilitator:

- Reviews the purpose of the group and the goals of the meeting
- Introduces the agenda, suggests ground rules, and encourages open participation
- Asks key questions
 - The first question might be very broad, such as "What are your general thoughts about the needs of families in this community?" Questions may get narrower over time, eventually turning to, "How do you feel that service X is working for families? What's going right and wrong with it, from your perspective?"
- Makes sure that everyone gets a chance to be heard
 - You can accomplish this by going around the circle to solicit responses one at a time, or by asking people to raise their hands or nod in agreement when they share an opinion voiced by another member

To keep the discussion moving:

- Summarize what you think you have heard, and ask if the group agrees
- Phrase the same question a different way
- Ask follow-up questions
- Look around the room and make brief eye contact, especially with those who may not be speaking much

After the group, study your findings. What common themes or patterns emerged? Where did you see differences, and why do think you saw them? Do have new questions as a result of your findings? What conclusions can your team agree on?

LARGE-GROUP FACILITATION

Large-group discussions typically include 25–40 people, and can be a highly effective way to get group consensus or make decisions with broad buy-in.

For very large groups, breakout activities are especially important. Facilitators must be adept at managing very quiet and very outspoken members of the group so everyone benefits from the experience and a range of opinions are surfaced. With groups larger than 40 people, facilitators usually require use of microphones and projector screens in order to introduce and collect data during the meeting.

Consider a large-group process when you:

- Need to gather input for a broad constituency
- Have a large-enough venue and the logistical capacity to arrange a large group
- Want to discuss topics that are not highly complicated or inherently emotional
- Have information to present that is well-organized
- Know precisely what you hope to achieve
- Have an expert facilitator and two or three additional staff to assist

Special considerations:

Large-group processes allow people who don't usually exchange viewpoints to come together in one place to share and build on one another's ideas. It's important to invite a wide variety of individuals from across sectors. Be sure to reach out to people who have not been included in past information-gathering processes.

Large group meetings usually last at least half a day. Know your head count in advance, and set up the space so participants can be seated comfortably in small groups, ideally at round tables. Make sure everyone is able to see the front of the room. Distribute materials to tables before the meeting begins. It's easy to lose people's attention in a large-group setting, so make sure your technology is ready to go, you have a portable microphone, coffee, and snacks. Fidget toys help, too.

Conducting the Group

The facilitator:

- Presents the purpose of the meeting and agenda to the group as a whole, regardless of size
- Makes sure that breakout groups of no more than six people each are arranged to create maximum diversity of opinion and perspective
 - Participants may need to be re-seated to create more optimal subgroups.
- Presents the information or data that the group has been convened to discuss
- Poses a series of questions that have been prepared ahead of time
 - Questions are tailored to the issue and group, of course, but a typical framework might be:
 - What are you seeing in this information?
 - What is exciting or interesting to you?
 - What is concerning to you?
 - What do you recommend as a next step?

Each breakout group should be given a handout of the questions and the following instructions:

- Your group will have 20 minutes to discuss the questions
- Choose someone to act as facilitator to lead you through the questions, someone to take notes, and someone to keep track of time
- Agree on one action recommendation as a group

After 20 minutes, bring everyone back together and have breakout groups report their key recommendation. The facilitator should write the recommendations on a flip chart or overhead projector. After the report-out, invite two to three brief questions or comments, signaling to everyone that you want to keep discussion moving.

Depending on the agenda, a second round of small-group discussions on other issues could take place; if there is enough time, have people form new breakout groups so they can work with different partners.

There is more than one way to process breakout group responses. The World Café approach is one of the most popular. Find resources about the approach on the organization's website.



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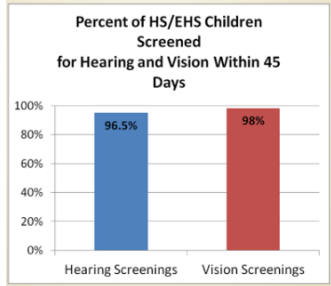
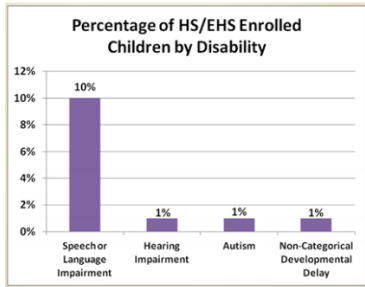


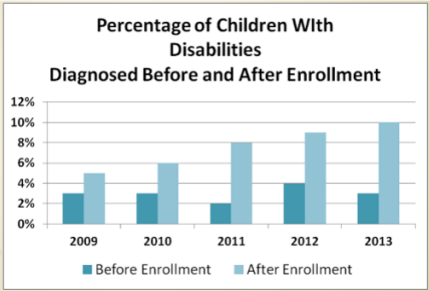
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Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis is a process that involves the review, manipulation, and organization of data. It's goal is to identify useful information that will inform decision-making and planning. There are many different types of data, and many methods for analyzing it.

| Techniques | Examples of Techniques Used to Analyze Information About Children With Disabilities |
|---|---|
| <p>Aggregate</p> <p>When you aggregate data, you total data from different sources to get the big picture. For example, teachers aggregate child outcomes data to get an overall picture of their classes. A center director looks at aggregated data from all of the classrooms in one center. Numbers from all centers are totaled to provide program-wide data. Aggregated data can inform program-wide changes in policies and procedures. This big picture view of data is especially useful in sharing information with such audiences as your governing body/Tribal Council and Policy Council. Aggregated data is also appropriate for your annual report to the public. In the Program Information Report (PIR), you submit aggregated data about your grantee to the Office of Head Start (OHS). OHS then aggregates this data to compile an overall view of Head Start in relation to a number of key indicators.</p> |  <p><i>This chart indicates that 96.5 percent of the children were screened for hearing and 98 percent were screened for vision within 45 days</i></p> |
| <p>Disaggregate</p> <p>Disaggregating allows you to take different pieces of data and obtain more details. There are many ways to disaggregate data. In this activity, we disaggregated by type of disability. We could disaggregate by program options, which include center-based, home-based, and family child care. We also could have disaggregated the data by the local education agency (LEA) and the appropriate Part C agency or receiving school. Other ways to disaggregate include gender and home language. How do you know</p> |  |

| Techniques | Examples of Techniques Used to Analyze Information About Children With Disabilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------|---|---|------|---|---|------|---|---|------|---|---|------|---|----|
| <p>which options to choose? First, know your questions. A Migrant and Seasonal Head Start program, for example, may want to disaggregate child outcomes data about the number of returning children versus the number of newly enrolled children. This can also be done by length of time children spend in the program. When you disaggregate data, you can dig deeper and deeper. Disaggregate program-wide data by site, site data by classroom, and classroom data by child. You can disaggregate five-year data by year, yearly data by month, and monthly data by week. Each time, you get a more magnified view of one piece of data.</p> | <p><i>Ten percent of the children have a speech or language impairment. For hearing impairment, autism, or non-categorical language delay, an equal number of children, one percent, have that type of disability.</i></p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Compare</p> <p>When you compare data, you are looking for differences that pinpoint an opportunity or a problem. You can compare results to a target goal, such as Head Start Program Performance Standards requirements. You can compare Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) results with Head Start thresholds, or child outcomes data to national norms. Comparing data over time helps identify trends. This can help you make predictions about the future. Using baseline data, you can track progress towards goals over time. Comparing data from different sources also can provide insights. For example, comparing completion rates of referrals for the various service providers with which your agency works would help you answer the question, "Are referrals and follow-ups completed more frequently with particular community agencies?" In conducting a community assessment, you frequently compare internal data from various sources with external data. Internal data sources may include family enrollment data or data on parent satisfaction with service providers. External data may be gathered from a number of sources, ranging from the U.S. Census data to local public schools.</p> | <div data-bbox="1528 813 1955 1101" data-label="Figure">  <table border="1"> <caption>Percentage of Children With Disabilities Diagnosed Before and After Enrollment</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Before Enrollment (%)</th> <th>After Enrollment (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>3</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>3</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>2</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>4</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>3</td> <td>10</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <p><i>The percentage of children who were diagnosed after enrollment has steadily increased between 2009 and 2013, from five to 10 percent. The number of children diagnosed before enrollment has fluctuated between two and four percent over this time period.</i></p> | Year | Before Enrollment (%) | After Enrollment (%) | 2009 | 3 | 5 | 2010 | 3 | 6 | 2011 | 2 | 8 | 2012 | 4 | 9 | 2013 | 3 | 10 |
| Year | Before Enrollment (%) | After Enrollment (%) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2009 | 3 | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2010 | 3 | 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2011 | 2 | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2012 | 4 | 9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2013 | 3 | 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

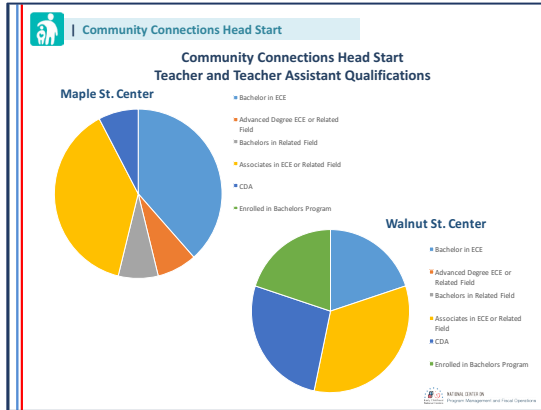


| Techniques | Examples of Techniques Used to Analyze Information About Children With Disabilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|-------|------------------------|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|--------------|------------|
| <p>Averages: Mean, Median, Mode, Range</p> <p>Calculating the mean, median, mode, and range for a series of numbers can aid in your data analysis. The mean is not always a good representation of the center of the data. An outlier (a very high or very low value) can distort the average. For instance, the average income for a community would be skewed if there were even just a few millionaires. Median gives you a number that is more representative of the middle. Your income is likely to be closer to the median income in your community than to the average income if your neighbors are millionaires.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Mean</p> <p>Mean is the average of a group of numbers. To calculate the mean, divide the total by the number of data points. In this case, 990 divided by 11 equals 90.</p> | <table border="1"> <caption>Elapsed time between identification of suspected disability and completion of IEP</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Child</th> <th>Length of time in days</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>AB</td><td>80</td></tr> <tr><td>CD</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr><td>EF</td><td>60</td></tr> <tr><td>GH</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr><td>IJ</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>KL</td><td>70</td></tr> <tr><td>MN</td><td>102</td></tr> <tr><td>OP</td><td>158</td></tr> <tr><td>QR</td><td>45</td></tr> <tr><td>ST</td><td>85</td></tr> <tr><td>UV</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr><td>Total</td><td>990</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Mean: $990 \div 11 = 90$</p> | Child | Length of time in days | AB | 80 | CD | 120 | EF | 60 | GH | 120 | IJ | 30 | KL | 70 | MN | 102 | OP | 158 | QR | 45 | ST | 85 | UV | 120 | Total | 990 |
| Child | Length of time in days | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| AB | 80 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CD | 120 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| EF | 60 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| GH | 120 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| IJ | 30 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| KL | 70 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| MN | 102 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OP | 158 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| QR | 45 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ST | 85 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| UV | 120 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 990 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Median</p> <p>The median is the middle point in the data. Put a series of numbers in order from lowest to highest and determine the middle value. This is the median. In this example, there are 11 items so the sixth item is the middle or median. If you have an even number of items, the median is calculated by adding the two middle items and dividing by two. It's easy to find the median by counting off from both sides of the data points. However, there is a formula that can be used as well. This is especially useful if you have a lot of data points. Calculate by adding up the number of data points, plus one, divided by two. In this case, there are 11 data points: 11 plus one equals 12; 12 divided by two equals six; and so the sixth number is the median.</p> | <table border="1"> <caption>Elapsed time between identification of suspected disability and completion of IEP</caption> <tbody> <tr> <td>30</td> <td>45</td> <td>60</td> <td>70</td> <td>85</td> <td>102</td> <td>120</td> <td>120</td> <td>120</td> <td>158</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | 30 | 45 | 60 | 70 | 85 | 102 | 120 | 120 | 120 | 158 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 30 | 45 | 60 | 70 | 85 | 102 | 120 | 120 | 120 | 158 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Techniques | Examples of Techniques Used to Analyze Information About Children With Disabilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------|------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|------------|----|------------|----|------------|----|------------|-------|-------------------|
| <p>Mode</p> <p>The mode is the number repeated the most frequently. In this case, the number 120 appears three times, so it is the mode.</p> | <table border="1"> <caption>Elapsed time between identification of suspected disability and completion of IEP</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Child</th> <th>Length of time in days</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>TI</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>QR</td><td>45</td></tr> <tr><td>EF</td><td>60</td></tr> <tr><td>AB</td><td>70</td></tr> <tr><td>CD</td><td>80</td></tr> <tr><td>GH</td><td>85</td></tr> <tr><td>ST</td><td>102</td></tr> <tr><td>UV</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr><td>KL</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr><td>MN</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr><td>OP</td><td>158</td></tr> </tbody> </table> | Child | Length of time in days | TI | 30 | QR | 45 | EF | 60 | AB | 70 | CD | 80 | GH | 85 | ST | 102 | UV | 120 | KL | 120 | MN | 120 | OP | 158 | | |
| Child | Length of time in days | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| TI | 30 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| QR | 45 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| AB | 70 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CD | 80 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| GH | 85 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ST | 102 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| UV | 120 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| KL | 120 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| MN | 120 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OP | 158 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Range</p> <p>Range is the difference between the lowest and highest values. The data in this table has been arranged from lowest to highest rather than being displayed in alphabetical order. To determine the range, subtract the lowest number from the highest number. In this case, subtract 30 from 158 to show a range of 128 days. The numbers 30 and 158, the two extremes, are also important to look at. The shortest length of time might provoke you to ask how your program was able to complete the Individualized Education Program (IEP) so quickly in this case and whether there are lessons learned you can apply in other situations. You would also want to learn why one IEP took 158 days to accomplish and consider what could have been done to move the process along more quickly.</p> | <table border="1"> <caption>Elapsed time between identification of suspected disability and completion of IEP</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Child</th> <th>Length of time in days</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>TI</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>QR</td><td>45</td></tr> <tr><td>EF</td><td>60</td></tr> <tr><td>AB</td><td>70</td></tr> <tr><td>CD</td><td>80</td></tr> <tr><td>GH</td><td>85</td></tr> <tr><td>ST</td><td>102</td></tr> <tr><td>UV</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr><td>KL</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr><td>MN</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr><td>OP</td><td>158</td></tr> <tr><td>Range</td><td>158-30=128</td></tr> </tbody> </table> | Child | Length of time in days | TI | 30 | QR | 45 | EF | 60 | AB | 70 | CD | 80 | GH | 85 | ST | 102 | UV | 120 | KL | 120 | MN | 120 | OP | 158 | Range | 158-30=128 |
| Child | Length of time in days | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| TI | 30 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| QR | 45 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| EF | 60 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| CD | 80 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| GH | 85 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ST | 102 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| UV | 120 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| KL | 120 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| MN | 120 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OP | 158 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Range | 158-30=128 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |



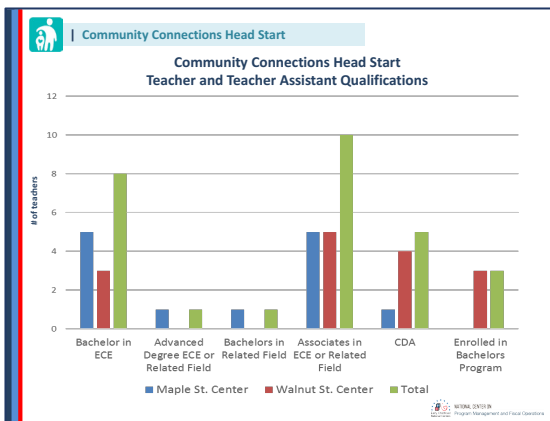
Displaying the Data



Pie Chart

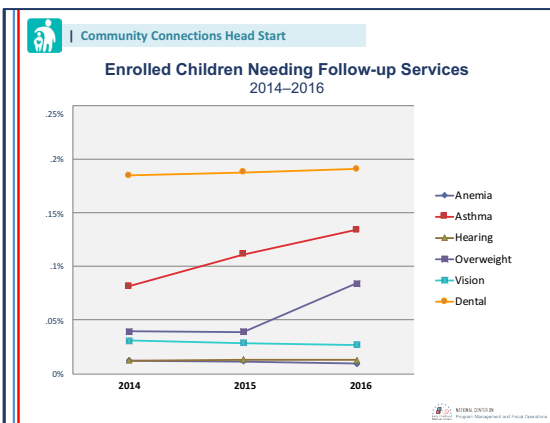
A pie chart shows how often something occurs. Slices or wedges of various sizes show the significance of the occurrence: the larger the slice of the pie, the larger the number of occurrences. The entire pie represents all occurrences.

To create a pie chart, the data must be converted to percentages; each slice represents a percentage of the total. When totaled, the slices equal approximately 100 percent. It is best to use a computer to construct pie charts.



Bar Chart

Use the bar chart to compare many items. It typically presents categories or items along the Y axis, with their values displayed on the X axis. You can also break up the values by another category or group.



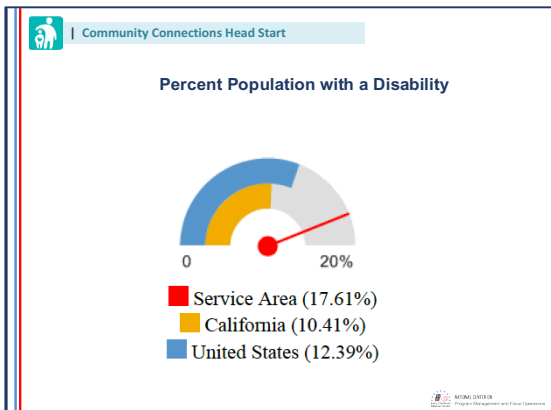
Graph

A graph shows the relationship between two variables. One set of data is plotted on the side of the graph, or the Y axis. Another set is plotted across the bottom, or the X axis.



Area Chart

The area chart looks similar to a line chart, and the areas under each line inside it are filled in with various colors. Hence, it is possible to display this chart as stacked for better comparison. It is particularly helpful if absolute or relative values stacked over a time period are required to be displayed.



Indicator

Indicators are particularly useful when you want to give an instant idea of how well the program is doing on a key performance indicators (KPI). Incorporating a simple “gauge indicator” visualization shows you immediately whether you’re above or below target, and whether you’re moving in the right direction.

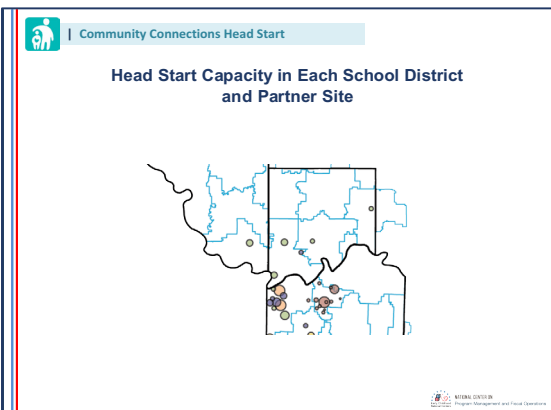
Community Connections Head Start

Community Assessment Population Data

| Age | 2010 Population | 2018 Population | Percent Population Change |
|---------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Birth-2 | 4,637 | 4,221 | -0.9% |
| 3-5 | 4,244 | 3,992 | -0.6% |
| 6-18 | 18,946 | 20,253 | 6.9% |
| 19-44 | 22,768 | 19,239 | -15.5% |
| 45-64 | 26,905 | 31,586 | 17.4% |
| 65+ | 14,752 | 15,917 | 7.9% |
| Total | 92,252 | 95,208 | 3.2% |

Pivot Table

A pivot table is a data summarization tool used in the context of data processing. Pivot tables are used to summarize, sort, reorganize, group, count, total or average data stored in a database. It allows its users to transform columns into rows and rows into columns.



Scatter (Area) Map

A scatter map helps viewers visualize geographical data across a region as data points on a map. You can show numeric data using circle color and size to represent the value of your data.



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Attributes of a Good Data Display

Data Display Quality Checklist

These checklists provide a list of structural and functional attributes to consider when preparing data for presentation or distribution.

Structural Components

| Attributes | Attribute Present (Y/N) | Comments |
|---|-------------------------|----------|
| Informative title | | |
| All axes are labeled | | |
| Population size noted | | |
| If data are presented as percentages, the numbers used to calculate the percentages are also provided | | |
| All variables are identified and labels provided | | |
| Dates for data points are provided, if applicable | | |
| A key identifies all symbols, shading, color, etc. | | |

Functional Components

| Attributes | Attribute Present (Y/N) | Comments |
|---|-------------------------|----------|
| Display is uncluttered and free of unnecessary detail and extraneous features | | |
| Uses an appropriate chart style (e.g., pie chart, clustered bar chart, stacked bar chart) | | |
| Communicates the story that the author wants to tell | | |

Created as a partnership between the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Washington School Information Processing Cooperative and Public Consulting Group. Used by permission.





Annotated Data Bibliography

| Resource | Description | Source |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Five Best Practices for Telling Great Stories with Data and Why It Will Make You a Better Analyst</p> | <p>Discover how to use data to tell stories and why it will improve data analysis skills.</p> | <p>Five Best Practices for Telling Great Stories with Data and Why It Will Make You a Better Analyst. (2012). Retrieved from www.tableau.com</p> |
| <p>Eight Tips for Adding Analytics to Your Marketing Mix</p> | <p>Find eight tips on how to get answers from data.</p> | <p>Schneider, A. Eight Tips for Adding Analytics to Your Marketing Mix. (2012). Retrieved from www.tableau.com</p> |
| <p>Five Steps for Structuring Data-informed Conversations and Action in Education</p> | <p>Data teams can explore a five-step process for data use: setting the stage, examining the data, understanding the findings, developing an action plan, and monitoring progress and measuring success. The guide includes a series of templates teams can use in the process.</p> | <p>Kekahio, W., & Baker, M. Five Steps for Structuring Data-Informed Conversations and Action in Education (REL 2013-001). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Pacific. (2013). Retrieved from www.ies.ed.gov</p> |

| Resource | Description | Source |
|--|---|---|
| The Results-Based Accountability Guide | Explore this guide to results-based accountability™ (RBA), a process developed by Mark Friedman, founder of the Fiscal Policy Studies Institute. It contains explanations of the RBA "Turn-the-Curve" template and how to develop performance measures and sort them in a quadrant using four criteria: effort, effect, quantity, and quality. | Results Leadership Group. The Results-Based Accountability Guide. (2010). Retrieved from www.clearimpact.com |
| W. K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook | This handbook was developed for projects funded by the Kellogg Foundation. Part Two includes a description of three steps in designing and conducting evaluations: determining data-collection methods, collecting data, and analyzing and interpreting data. Various data collection methods and data analysis are described. There is also a section on communicating findings and utilizing results. | The Kellogg Foundation. W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook. (1998). Retrieved from www.wkkf.org |
| Which Chart or Graph Is Right for You? | Discover a variety of chart formats and learn when to use each. | Hardin, M., Hom, D., Perez, R., and Williams, L. Which Chart or Graph is Right for You? (2012). Retrieved from www.theathenaforum.org |





Glossary of Data Analysis Terms and Concepts

| Term | Definition |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Accurate | Data that are correct (free from error), clear, and have adequate detail |
| Aggregate | A whole formed by combining several elements |
| Aggregate child-level assessment data | The combined data collected by an agency on the status and progress of the children it serves. Provides summary information about groups of children enrolled in specific classes, centers, home-based or other options, groups, or settings; other groups of children, such as dual language learners, or by specific domains of development |
| Analysis | An investigation of the component parts of a whole and their relationship in making up the whole |
| Availability | Data is present and ready for use; obtainable |
| Baseline | An accurate measurement of existing developmental and process levels prior to implementing change to allow a clear measurement of the impact of inputs and activities |
| Child-level assessment data | The data collected by an agency on an individual child from one or more valid and reliable assessments of a child's status and progress, including but not limited to direct assessment, structured observations, checklists, staff or parent report measures, and portfolio records or work samples |
| Code | A method used to label important pieces of information |
| Compare | To estimate, measure, or note the similarity or dissimilarity between |
| Correlation | Having a mutual relationship or connection in which one thing affects or depends on another. Two things may correlate but that does not mean the first thing causes the second |
| Dashboard | A visual display of the most important information needed to achieve one or more objectives which fits entirely on a single page so it can be monitored at a glance |
| Data | Facts or information usually used to calculate, analyze, or plan something |
| Disaggregate | To separate into its component parts |
| Factor | A circumstance, fact, or influence that contributes to a result or outcome |
| Hypothesis | An idea or theory that is not proven but leads to further study or discussion |
| Information | Data collected, organized, ordered, and imbued with meaning and context |
| Integrity | The accuracy and consistency of data over its entire life cycle |
| Mean | The average of a group of numbers |
| Median | The middle value of numbers when they are ordered from smallest to largest |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| Mode | The value that occurs most frequently in a given set of data |
| Outlier | A person or thing differing from all other members of a particular group or set; events or observations which do not conform to an expected pattern |
| Pattern | Something that happens in a regular and repeated way |
| Personally Identifiable Information (PII) | Data that could identify a specific individual, including but not limited to a child's name, name of a child's family member, street address of the child, social security number, or other information that is linked or linkable to the child |
| Predictive | Data that is useful to calculate behavior and anticipate the consequences of change |
| Qualitative | Information from sources such as interviews, open-ended questionnaire items, and focus groups that is represented in verbal or narrative form or anecdotes |
| Quality Data | Data that are complete, accurate, timely and relevant |
| Quantitative | Data that are expressed in numerical terms |
| Range | The difference between the maximum value and the minimum value |
| Relevant | Data that is connected or has a bearing on the specific issue at hand |
| Reliability | The trait of being dependable or reliable. Tools that provide dependable and consistent information |
| School readiness goals | The expectations of children's status and progress across domains of language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches to learning, physical well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development that will improve their readiness for kindergarten |
| Security | The protection of information, such as a data base, from destructive forces and from the unwanted actions of unauthorized users |
| Sum | The whole amount |
| Themes | A unifying idea that is a recurrent element or a narrative leading to a set of patterns |
| Timely | Data captured quickly after the activity and made available as soon as possible |
| Trend | A general direction in which something is developing or changing |
| Usability | The extent to which data can be used with effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction |
| Validity | The quality of being logically and factually sound |
| Variable | A characteristic, number, or quantity that changes over time |
| Variance | The quality of being subject to difference |

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Community Assessment Requirements in the Head Start Program Performance Standards

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Determining community, strengths, needs, and resources, 45 CFR §1302.11</p> | <p>(b) <i>Community wide strategic planning and needs assessment (community assessment)</i>. (1) To design a program that meets community needs, and builds on strengths and resources, a program must conduct a community assessment at least once over the five-year grant period. The community assessment must use data that describes community strengths, needs, and resources and include, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (ii) The number of eligible infants, toddlers, preschool age children, and expectant mothers, including their geographic location, race, ethnicity, and languages they speak, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (B) Children experiencing homelessness in collaboration with, to the extent possible, McKinney-Vento Local Education Agency Liaisons (42 U.S.C. 11432 (6)(A)); (C) Children in foster care; and (D) Children with disabilities, including types of disabilities and relevant services and resources provided to these children by community agencies; (iii) The education, health, nutrition and social service needs of eligible children and their families, including prevalent social or economic factors that impact their well-being; (iv) Typical work, school, and training schedules of parents with eligible children; (v) Other child development, child care centers, and family child care programs that serve eligible children, including home visiting, publicly funded state and local preschools, and the approximate number of eligible children served; (vi) Resources that are available in the community to address the needs of eligible children and their families; and, (vii) Strengths of the community. <p>(2) A program must annually review and update the community assessment to reflect any significant changes including increased availability of publicly-funded pre-kindergarten- (including an assessment of how the pre-kindergarten available in the community meets the needs of the parents and children served by the program, and whether it is offered for a full school day), rates of family and child homelessness, and significant shifts in community demographics and resources.</p> |
|--|--|



| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>(3) A program must consider whether the characteristics of the community allow it to include children from diverse economic backgrounds that would be supported by other funding sources, including private pay, in addition to the program’s eligible funded enrollment. A program must not enroll children from diverse economic backgrounds if it would result in a program serving less than its eligible funded enrollment.</p> |
| <p>Determining, verifying, and documenting eligibility, 45 CFR §1302.12</p> | <p>(a)(3) If a program has an alternate method to reasonably determine eligibility based on its community assessment, geographic and administrative data, or from other reliable data sources, it may petition the responsible HHS official to waive requirements in paragraphs (a)(1)(i) and (ii) of this section</p> |
| <p>Selection process, 45 CFR §1302.14</p> | <p>(a) <i>Selection criteria.</i> (1) A program must annually establish selection criteria that weigh the prioritization of selection of participants, based on community needs identified in the community needs assessment as described in §1302.11(b), and including family income, whether the child is homeless, whether the child is in foster care, the child’s age, whether the child is eligible for special education and related services, or early intervention services, as appropriate, as determined under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (20 U.S.C. 1400 <i>et seq.</i>) and, other relevant family or child risk factors.</p> |
| <p>Enrollment, 45 CFR §1302.15</p> | <p>(c) <i>Reserved slots.</i> If a program determines from the community assessment there are families experiencing homelessness in the area, or children in foster care that could benefit from services, the program may reserve one or more enrollment slots for pregnant women and children experiencing homelessness and children in foster care, when a vacancy occurs. No more than three percent of a program’s funded enrollment slots may be reserved. If the reserved enrollment slot is not filled within 30 days, the enrollment slot becomes vacant and then must be filled in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section.</p> |
| <p>Determining program structure, 45 CFR §1302.20</p> | <p>(a) <i>Choose a program option.</i> (1) A program must choose to operate one or more of the following program options: center-based, home-based, family child care, or an approved locally-designed variation as described in §1302.24. The program option(s) chosen must meet the needs of children and families based on the community assessment described in §1302.11(b). A Head Start program serving preschool-aged children may not provide only the option described in §1302.22(a) and (c)(2).</p> <p>(2) To choose a program option and develop a program calendar, a program must consider in conjunction with the annual review of the community assessment described in</p> |



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| | <p>§1302.11(b)(2), whether it would better meet child and family needs through conversion of existing slots to full school day or full working day slots, extending the program year, conversion of existing Head Start slots to Early Head Start slots as described in paragraph (c) of this section, and ways to promote continuity of care and services. A program must work to identify alternate sources to support full working day services. If no additional funding is available, program resources may be used.</p> |
| <p>Child health status and care, 45 CFR §1302.42</p> | <p>(b)(4) A program must identify each child’s nutritional health needs, taking into account available health information, including the child’s health records, and family and staff concerns, including special dietary requirements, food allergies, and community nutrition issues as identified through the community assessment or by the Health Services Advisory Committee.</p> |
| <p>Community partnerships and coordination with other early childhood education programs, 45 CFR §1302.53</p> | <p>(a) <i>Community partnerships.</i> (1) A program must establish ongoing collaborative relationships and partnerships with community organizations such as establishing joint agreements, procedures, or contracts and arranging for onsite delivery of services as appropriate, to facilitate access to community services that are responsive to children’s and families’ needs and family partnership goals, and community needs and resources, as determined by the community assessment.</p> |
| <p>Management system, 45 CFR §1302.101</p> | <p>(i) Utilizing information from the program’s community assessment about the languages spoken throughout the program service area to anticipate child and family needs;</p> <p>(ii) Identifying community resources and establishing ongoing collaborative relationships and partnerships with community organizations consistent with the requirements in §1302.53(a); and</p> |
| <p>Achieving program goals, 45 CFR §1302.102</p> | <p>(a) <i>Establishing program goals.</i> A program, in collaboration with the governing body and policy council, must establish goals and measurable objectives that include: Strategic long-term goals for ensuring programs are and remain responsive to community needs as identified in their community assessment as described in subpart A of this part;</p> <p>(d)(2) Annually, a program must publish and disseminate a report that complies with section 644(a)(2) of the Act and includes a summary of a program’s most recent community assessment, as described in §1302.11(b), consistent with privacy protections in subpart C of part 1303 of this chapter.</p> |

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| <p>Implementation of program performance standards, 45 CFR §1302.103</p> | <p>(b) A program's approach to implement the changes included in parts 1301 through 1304 of this chapter must ensure adequate preparation for effective and timely service delivery to children and their families including, at a minimum, review of community assessment data to determine the most appropriate strategy for implementing required program changes, including assessing any changes in the number of children who can be served, as necessary, the purchase of and training on any curriculum, assessment, or other materials, as needed, assessment of program-wide professional development needs, assessment of staffing patterns, the development of coordinated approaches described in §1302.101(b), and the development of appropriate protections for data sharing;</p> |
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Community Assessment Requirements in the Head Start Act

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| <p>Sec. 640 (g)(1) For the purpose of expanding Head Start programs, the Secretary shall take into consideration—</p> | <p>C) the extent to which the applicant has undertaken a community- wide strategic planning and needs assessment involving other entities, including community organizations, and Federal, State, and local public agencies (including the local educational agency liaison designated under section 722(g)(1)(J)(ii) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii))), that provide services to children and families, such as—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) family support services; (ii) child abuse prevention services; (iii) protective services; (iv) foster care; (v) services for families in whose homes English is not the language customarily spoken; (vi) services for children with disabilities; and (vii) services for homeless children <p>(D) the extent to which the family needs assessment and community wide strategic planning and needs assessment of the applicant reflect a need to provide full-working-day or full-calendar-year services and the extent to which, and manner in which, the applicant demonstrates the ability to collaborate and participate with the State and local community providers of child care or preschool services to provide full-working-day full calendar year services.</p> |
| <p>Sec. 641A (c)(2) The Secretary shall ensure that reviews described in subparagraphs (A) through (C) of paragraph (1)—</p> | <p>D) include as part of the reviews, an assessment of the extent to which the programs address the communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment described in section 640(g)(1)(C)</p> |



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| <p>Sec. 641A (h)(3) The Secretary shall—</p> | <p>(B) for each such Head Start agency operating a program with an actual enrollment that is less than its funded enrollment, as determined under subparagraph (A), develop, in collaboration with such agency, a plan and timetable for reducing or eliminating under-enrollment taking into consideration— (i) the quality and extent of the outreach, recruitment, and communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment conducted by such agency</p> |
| <p>Sec. 642 (d)(2) Each Head Start agency shall ensure the sharing of accurate and regular information for use by the governing body and the policy council, about program planning, policies, and Head Start agency operations, including—</p> | <p>(G) the communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment of the Head Start agency, including any applicable updates</p> |
| <p>Sec. 642 (h)</p> | <p>Technical Assistance and Training Plan— In order to receive funds under this subchapter, a Head Start agency shall— develop an annual technical assistance and training plan. Such plan shall be based on the agency’s self-assessment, the communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment, the needs of parents and children to be served by such agency, and the results of the reviews conducted under section 641A(c).</p> |
| <p>Sec. 645 (a)(4)</p> | <p>After demonstrating a need through a communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment, a Head Start agency may apply to the Secretary to convert part-day sessions, particularly consecutive part-day sessions, into full-working-day sessions</p> |
| <p>Sec. 645 (a)(5)</p> | <p>(A) Upon written request and pursuant to the requirements of this paragraph, a Head Start agency may use funds that were awarded under this subchapter to serve children age 3 to compulsory school age, in order to serve infants and toddlers if the agency submits an application to the Secretary containing, as specified in rules issued by the Secretary, all of the following information: (ii) A communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment demonstrating how the use of such funds would best meet the needs of the community</p> |

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| <p>Sec. 648 (a)(3) In providing training and technical assistance and for allocating resources for such assistance under this section, the Secretary shall—</p> | <p>(B) to the maximum extent practicable— (iii) assist Head Start agencies and programs in conducting and participating in communitywide strategic planning and needs assessments, including the needs of homeless children and their families, and in conducting self-assessments.</p> |
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References in the Head Start Act Requiring the Use of Community Assessment Data

Some requirements in the Head Start Act can only be met by taking into consideration the data collected and analyzed during the community assessment process. The following paraphrased references identify how community assessment data must be used to meet the requirements of the Head Start Act:

- When making funding determinations, there must be consideration for: the lack of resources available in the community that may prevent the Head Start agency from providing all or a portion of the non-federal contribution; whether the Head Start agency is located in a community adversely affected by a major disaster; and the impact on the community that would result if the Head Start agency ceased to carry out such program (Sec. 640(b)(1), (4), and (5)).
- In selecting an applicant to be designated as a Head Start agency, there must be consideration for the plan of the applicant to coordinate and collaborate with other public or private entities providing early childhood education and development programs and services for young children in the community involved (Sec. 641(d)(2)(H)).
- For each grantee operating with an enrollment under its funded enrollment, a plan must be developed taking into consideration: changing demographics, the ability to provide full working day programs where needed, the availability and use of other early childhood education, and development options (Sec. 641A(h)(3)(B)(ii), (iv), and (v)).
- The Policy Council shall approve and submit to the governing body decisions about activities to ensure that the Head Start agency is responsive to community and parent needs (Sec. 642(c)(2)(D)(i)).
- A Head Start agency must collaborate and coordinate with public and private entities to the maximum extent practicable (Sec. 642(e)).
- Training and technical assistance shall be available to assist programs in developing and implementing full-working-day and full calendar year programs where community need is clearly identified (Sec. (648(a)(3)(B)(iv)).



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National Resources for Community Assessment Data

This chart highlights a number of government agencies, national organizations, and research groups that may provide sources of data that can be used for your community assessment. Keep in mind that this list is not exhaustive; other national resources, as well as local ones, may provide you with valuable information for your community assessment.

| Agency / Organization | Area of Focus | Website |
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| Administration for Children and Families (ACF) | Promotes the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities with funding, strategic partnerships, guidance, and training and technical assistance. They maintain data and reports on a variety of topics, and you can link to information about a number of programs and initiatives from their website. | www.acf.hhs.gov |
| American Fact Finder | Provides access to official and current demographic, economic, and geographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau. Topics include: population estimates, housing, and economics, and information can be searched by multiple criteria. | www.factfinder.census.gov |
| Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) | A national nonprofit organization that works to improve the lives of low-income people. | www.clasp.org |
| Child Trends | Monitors and examines more than 120 indicators of children's well-being. | www.childtrends.org |
| Child Welfare Information Gateway | Promotes the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, youth, and families. They maintain information, resources, and data covering topics on child welfare, child abuse and neglect, out-of-home care, adoption, and more. | www.childwelfare.gov |



| Agency / Organization | Area of Focus | Website |
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| Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health | Examines the physical and emotional health of children. Special emphasis is placed on factors that may relate to the well-being of children. Databases can be searched by topic or by state or geographic region. | www.nschdata.org |
| Homelessness Research Institute | Working to prevent and end homelessness by improving policy, building capacity, and educating opinion leaders. They have developed interactive maps, calculators, and charts with data about issues related to homelessness. | www.endhomelessness.org |
| Kids Count | A national and state effort to track the status of children in the U.S. Their data center has state-by-state data on multiple indicators of child and family well-being. | www.aecf.org |
| Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) | Programs promote and improve the health of mothers, infants, children, and adolescents. They have rich data on children's health and healthcare-related issues. | www.mchb.hrsa.gov |
| National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) | Dedicated to promoting the economic security, health, and well-being of America's low-income families and children. They maintain information on state demographics and early childhood profiles. | www.nccp.org |
| National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) | Maintains information about subject matter achievement, instructional experiences, and school environments for populations of students, and information about factors that may be related to children's learning. | www.nces.ed.gov |
| National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) | The nation's principal health statistics agency. | www.cdc.gov |

| Agency / Organization | Area of Focus | Website |
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| National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER) | Supports early childhood education initiatives by providing objective, nonpartisan information based on research. They profile state-funded pre-kindergarten programs and national trends for enrollment in, quality of, and state spending on preschool. Tables include information on state-funded pre-K, Head Start, child care, and U.S. Census data. | www.nieer.org |
| Office of Child Care | Administers the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). Works to promote family economic self-sufficiency and help children succeed in school and life through affordable, high-quality early care and afterschool programs. They maintain reports on CCDF data by state. | www.acf.hhs.gov |
| Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) | Leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. Has extensive behavioral health data. | www.samhsa.gov |



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Notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.



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