

Leadership Competencies 3, 16, and 17: Community Partnerships

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Chapter Progress Key

- Not Started
- In Progress
- Completed

What Are These Competencies?

Competency 3: Know how to access and use external health resources, including technical assistance providers, health consultants, and state, tribal, and community agencies.

- Leadership Competency 3 highlights the importance of knowing how to identify the agencies and individuals outside of the program who can assist in strengthening Head Start health services.
- Leaders who manage health services engage technical assistance providers,

consultants, and other available experts to help implement comprehensive health services.

Competency 16: Establish partnerships with local healthcare providers to support the needs of children and families and promote healthy communities.

- Leadership Competency 16 focuses on the importance of creating partnerships with local healthcare providers and agencies to meet the diverse needs of children and families.
- Leaders who manage health services collaborate with local partners to build community-wide capacity to promote better health for all.

Competency 17: Maintain a Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) that includes engaged Head Start families, health professionals, program staff, and other community volunteers.

- Leadership Competency 17 focuses on the role of leaders in establishing and maintaining an HSAC.
- The HSAC brings together Head Start families, staff, and partners to make recommendations to address pressing or emerging health concerns.

Why are these competencies important? *Select each icon.*

- Technical assistance providers can bring new resources, brainstorm strategies, and share best practices used by other programs.
- Effective partnerships between healthcare providers and Head Start programs enable everybody to respond to the health, wellness, and safety needs of children and families.
- Leaders improve Head Start when they engage families and community partners in determining how to implement health services.

Accessing and Using External Health Resources

Program leaders identify gaps in their service delivery to find and use appropriate resources to meet those needs. *Select each to learn more.*

- A [child care health consultant \(CCHC\)](#) can train staff on medication

administration.

- A [nutrition consultant](#) can review menus and recommend how to care for children with special dietary needs.
- An [infant and early childhood mental health consultant \(IECMHC\)](#) can support programs to implement trauma informed care.
- A representative of a community agency, such as a [Lion's Club](#), can assist programs with vision and hearing screenings.
- A [training and technical assistance \(T/TA\)](#) provider can guide staff and communicate best practices.

Tips for Building Strong Collaborations with Healthcare Providers

Partnerships with healthcare providers have advantages for both programs and communities. Providers can join Head Start staff and families in championing the needs of young children. These relationships can also help more families learn about Head Start services and connect to local healthcare providers. *Select each number for tips to build and sustain collaborations.*

- Invite partners to visit your program.
- Offer “lunch and learn” meetings at the offices of pediatric providers and other health professionals.
- Share program newsletters with community partners
- Invite local healthcare providers and agencies to an onsite health fair to share what they do and how they can support families.
- Ask healthcare providers how your program can help them support the families in their care.

Common Elements

Some common elements in strong collaborations include:

- Shared vision and commitment to doing what's best for children and families
- Honest and open communication, even when the topics are difficult
- Willingness to be flexible and responsive to each other's priorities
- Mutual accountability and regularly monitoring progress towards goals

Health Services Advisory Committees (HSACs) *Select each to learn more.*

- Head Start leaders establish and maintain effective HSACs by fully engaging members, including families and professionals, who play meaningful roles in their programs and communities.
- HSAC members address local health issues; establish and review health policies, procedures, and plans; and mobilize community resources.
- Members share and review community health data to identify prevalent and emerging health concerns.
- HSACs that prioritize a family-centered focus are better able to provide comprehensive, integrated, and effective health services to children and their families.

Families as Experts

Leaders intentionally prepare family members to be an integral part of the HSAC. Families have expertise about their own children and can inform program staff and community members about their cultural values and traditions. Families bring a valuable perspective to the HSAC on the availability and responsiveness of healthcare services through their unique experiences as consumers.

Identifying Community Partners to Serve on the HSAC

Finding and working with the right partners to complement a program's strengths and needs is an important part of any leader's job.

The program **community assessment*** can be a starting point for identifying partners that fill strategic gaps.

*The program community assessment uses data that describes community strengths, needs, and resources. These include the factors that impact the well-being, education, health, nutrition and social service needs of children and families

Leaders can also work with their HSAC to identify which partners can address gaps in services or facilitate improvements described in the program's annual **self-assessment**.**

**The program self-assessment uses data to help programs evaluate how they are doing, identify systemic issues that may affect the quality of their services, and implement new strategies to better meet the needs of children and families.

Today's technology offers a wide variety of [virtual meeting tools](#) to help leaders manage logistical challenges and facilitate productive relationships.

Try Your Hand

Your community assessment has identified a lack of safe outdoor play spaces, and your program has determined that addressing this is a priority for the families you serve. Which partners can you work with to create more opportunities for physical activities in your community? *Select your response below.*

1 of 5

- a. Boys & Girls Club
- b. Pharmacies
- c. Nursing schools

Correct Answer: a. The Boys & Girls Club has programs aimed at supporting healthy children and improving the community.

2 of 5

- a. Boards of Health
- b. Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- c. Cooperative extension service

Correct Answer: c. Cooperative extensions are outreach units of local universities that focus on having a positive impact on the community.

3 of 5

- a. Elementary schools
- b. Nursing schools
- c. Pharmacies

Correct Answer: a. Local elementary schools can make their outdoor play spaces available to the community.

4 of 5

- a. Boards of Health
- b. Parks and Recreation Department
- c. Pharmacies

Correct Answer: b. Parks and Recreation departments can help you identify programs and parks or trails that meet the needs of your families.

5 of 5

- a. WIC
- b. Nonprofit organizations
- c. Boards of Health

Correct answer: b. Many [nonprofit organizations](#) offer support for building outdoor play spaces.

Summary *Select the buttons to review the main concepts covered in this course.*

- **External Health Resources:** Leaders who manage health services engage technical assistance providers, consultants, and other available experts to help implement comprehensive health services.
- **Partnerships with Healthcare Providers:** Leaders who manage health services collaborate with local partners to build community-wide capacity to promote better health for all.
- **HSAC:** The HSAC brings together Head Start families, staff, and partners to make recommendations to address pressing or emerging health concerns.

Connecting with Others

- If you have more questions, contact the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness (NCECHW) at health@ecetta.info or (toll-free) 1-888-227-5125.
- Join [MyPeers](#): a collaborative platform for the early care and education community
- Subscribe to the American Academy of Pediatrics' [Early Childhood listserv](#)

Congratulations. You have reached the end of the module!

Resources

Resources throughout the module:

- [1.6.0.1: Child Care Health Consultants](#)
- [Qualifications of a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist](#)
- [Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation and Your Program](#)
- [Lions Clubs](#)
- [Office of Head Start Training and Technical Assistance](#)
- [Directory of Virtual Meeting Tools](#)
- [KaBOOM!](#)

Additional Resources related to External Health Resources

- [Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center](#)
- [National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education](#)

- [Partnership Relationships: Resources](#)
- [T/TA Centers](#)

Additional Resources related to Health Care Providers as Partners

- [Consider working with Head Start/Early Head Start to meet needs of vulnerable patients](#)
- [Dental Hygienist Liaison Project](#)
- [Strong Connections, Strong Families: Increasing Collaboration Between Head Start and the Medical Home](#)

Additional Resources related to Health Services Advisory Committees

- [A 21st Century Vision for Your Health Services Advisory Committee](#)
- [Build on a Responsive Community Assessment](#)
- [Raising the Bar: Exemplary Head Start Health Services Advisory Committees](#) (Video)
- [Virtual Health Services Advisory Committee Meetings](#) (Video)
- [Weaving Connections: Health Services Advisory Committee](#) (Video and accompanying document in English and Spanish)