

Key Considerations for Tailoring Recruitment Strategies

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Narrator: Hello from The Agricultural and Labor Program Inc. in Florida! Today I want to discuss recruiting for Head Start programs. Recruitment is a systematic year-round process that involves reaching out to families in your program's service area.

Because each family is unique, programs need to be strategic, thoughtful, creative, and inclusive in their recruitment planning efforts. By tailoring recruitment processes and using an equity lens, programs can successfully reach more eligible children and families.

An important part of your recruitment plan includes accurate data. Data from the community assessment is used to identify recruitment areas within the program's larger service area. Tracking and monitoring outreach efforts offers opportunities to analyze data and make informed decisions and continuous improvements to your plan. How does your program use data to reach those most in need of your services?

Another critical component of your recruitment plan is focusing on messaging and developing a system for training staff to work with diverse families and cultures. Recruitment and enrollment materials should reflect culture, language, and literacy needs in the community.

A tailored, audience-specific message highlighting the program's ability to provide safe and high-quality learning environments is key to creating successful recruitment materials. How do your recruitment approaches and materials demonstrate sensitivity and respect for the diverse families in the geographic area served?

Another significant part of the recruitment plan involves strategically planning and orchestrating activities and timelines. Go beyond sharing flyers, posters, and brochures. Utilize multiple channels, including social media, to engage families and connect with the community. Also, enlist the help of your community partners in promoting and supporting your outreach and recruitment efforts.

Recruitment activities that involve past and present families, staff, and the community, including outreach to fathers, male caregivers, grandparents raising grandchildren, and same-sex caregivers, are inclusive and help spread the word about your program. How does your program engage with community partners to support avenues for enrollment?

In closing, ensure that your recruitment plan includes targeted activities to enroll at least 10% of children with disabilities. Your plan should also incorporate specific outreach activities and messaging to populations that are categorically eligible, such as families experiencing homelessness, those who receive public assistance, such as TANF, SSI or SNAP, and children in

foster care. Programs may also consider strategies to reach pregnant women. What steps will you take next to improve recruitment at your program?

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