

Collaboration: Establishing and Strengthening Community Head Start Relationships

The new school year is approaching, meaning, it's a great time to initiate or revive connections with your community Head Start Program. Did you know that over six thousand WIC families are also Head Start families? Just think of how client services could be improved and simplified by our programs collaborating.

Last October, you completed a collaboration survey. From that survey many success stories surfaced, in addition, a need to improve the Head Start and WIC collaboration. Listed are just a few benefits of establishing this partnership. Your local Head Start Program could:

- Encourage their families to attend WIC appointments and classes,
- Provide the second nutrition education contact,
- Furnish facilities for satellite clinics,
- Offer in-home follow up by family advocates, and/or
- Reinforce your nutrition education messages in classrooms and at parent meetings.

To help get you started, here are some resources:

1. Web sites that list Head Start Programs in your area:

Oregon Pre-Kindergarten Head Start

http://www.ode.state.or.us/gradelevel/pre_k/headstartpkdirectory.pdf

Oregon Child Development Coalition (OCDC) Migrant Head Start

http://www.ode.state.or.us/gradelevel/pre_k/ocdcprogram.pdf

Tribal Head Start

http://www.ode.state.or.us/gradelevel/pre_k/tribalheadstartprograms.pdf

2. Tips for Beginning the School Year Together document (attached)

This is the first in a series of best practice 'tips' to help you work more closely with your community Head Start Program.

3. Head Start Date Request Form (attached)

This form allows you to track shared families' heights, weight, and hemoglobins with your community Head Start Program.

Please let me know your thoughts or ideas on this outreach morsel.

Coming soon.... ***the Collaboration Corner*** on the Web featuring helpful tips for working with our community partners. Stay tuned!



WIC – Head Start Collaboration

Working together to better serve our “shared families”.

Tips for Beginning the School Year Together

Getting started:

Contact your local Head Start Health and Nutrition Specialist or Head Start Director to talk about ways to make it easier for “**shared families**” to participate in both programs.

Ideas to help families through collaboration:

- ★ Do new WIC certifications at Head Start “round-up” or have a WIC representative at round-up to do outreach and schedule future appointments.
- ★ Make a plan to coordinate care for shared high risk families. Head Start family advocates can help with follow-up and continuity of care at home visits. Visits are conducted throughout the school year.
- ★ Propose Head Start parent training could be used as a second nutrition education contact.
- ★ Share the most recent weights/heights and hemoglobins (see attached sample data request form).
- ★ Request Head Start teachers and family advocates encourage shared families to come to their WIC appointments. Some Head Start programs might even be able to provide transportation.
- ★ Agree on shared nutrition education messages for the school year.
- ★ Offer to attend the Head Start Health Advisory meetings.
- ★ Plan joint staff training opportunities such as Civil Rights, CPR and First Aid, nutrition and feeding relationship.
- ★ Plan staff wellness collaborations and possible competitions.

