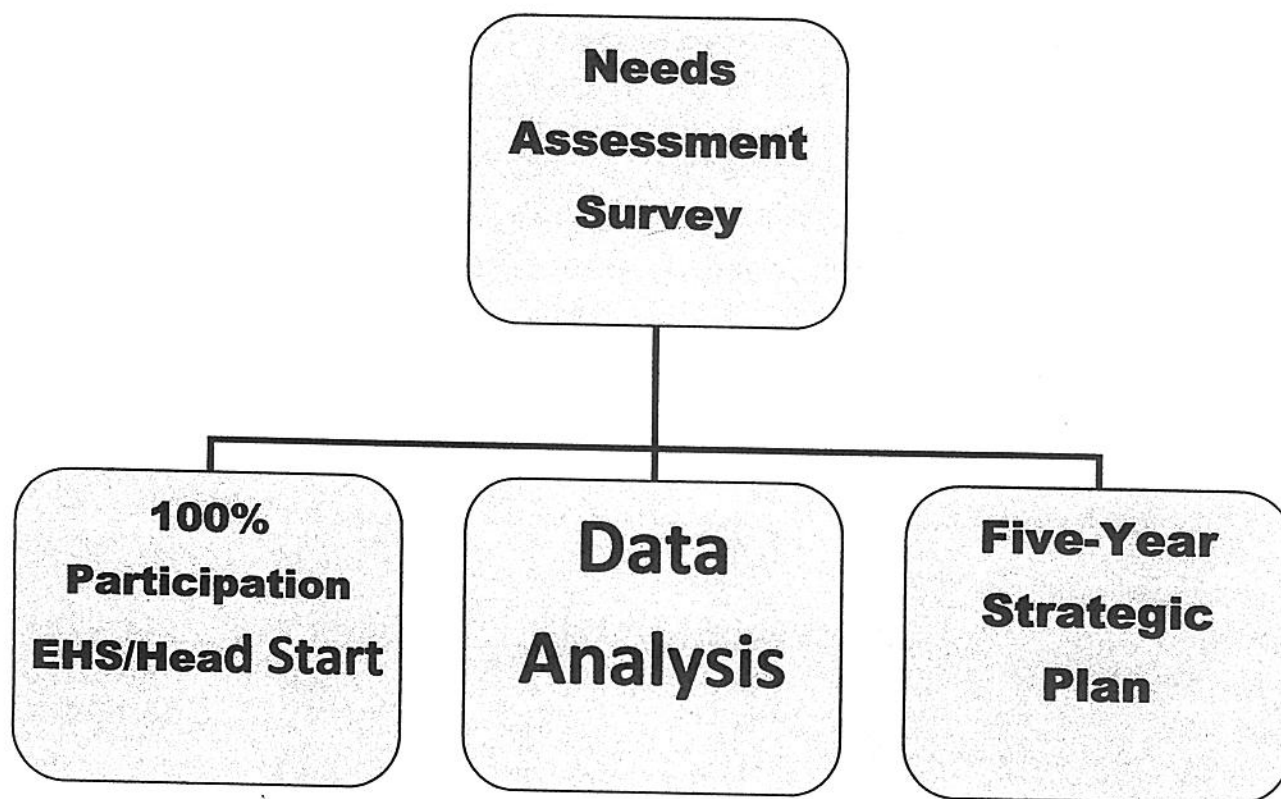


**ARKANSAS HEAD START
STATE COLLABORATION OFFICE**

**2011 Needs
Assessment Results**
Data Analysis Summary Report



*Created & Reported by
Jacqualine Dedman, Director*

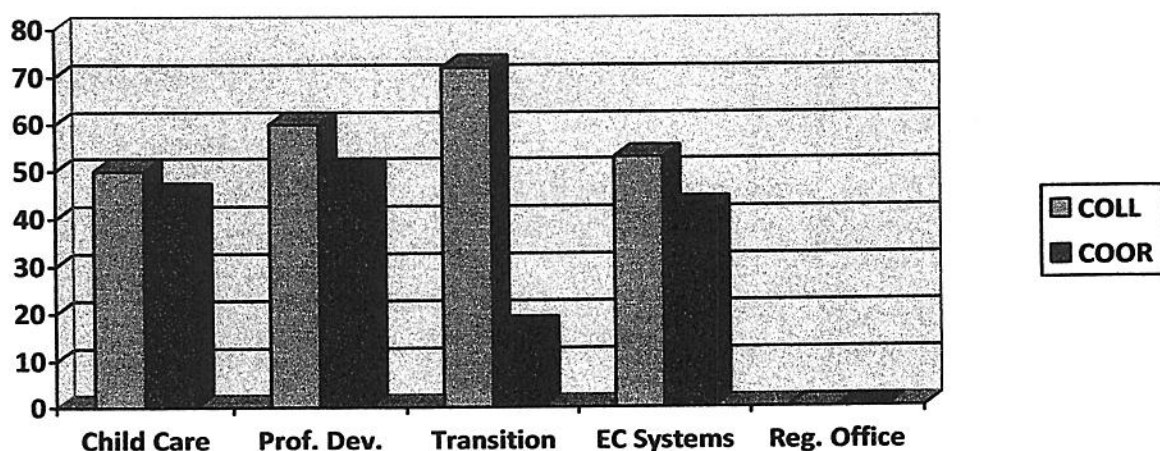
NEEDS ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Introduction

The Head start Act (as amended December, 2007) requires the Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) to conduct a needs assessment of Early Head start and Head Start grantees and delegate agencies in the state in the areas of coordination, collaboration alignment of services, and alignment of curricula and assessments used in Head start programs with the Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework and, as appropriate, State Learning Standards.

The Head Start Act also requires the HSSCOs to use the results of the needs assessment to develop a strategic plan outlining how we will assist and support EHS/Head start grantees in meeting the requirements of the Head Start Act. This plan must be updated annually and made available to the general public. Attached you will find the data analysis highlights on areas identified as needing assistance and support. The strategic plan will be completed and shared with the AHSA board and then to the public by making it available through the AHSA's web-site. An HSSCO Needs Assessment timeline has been attached for your convenience in order to show when to expect the completion of the strategic plan.

The data tables listed below show the strengths for what is working well in the EHS/Head Start programs in all eleven areas that were surveyed. The first table shows the priority areas (Child Care, Professional Development, Transition and Alignment, and Early Childhood Systems) for the Office of Head Start and the Dallas Regional Office. The Regional Office has not yet identified their priorities at this time.



CC –State Agency for Child Care at 50%

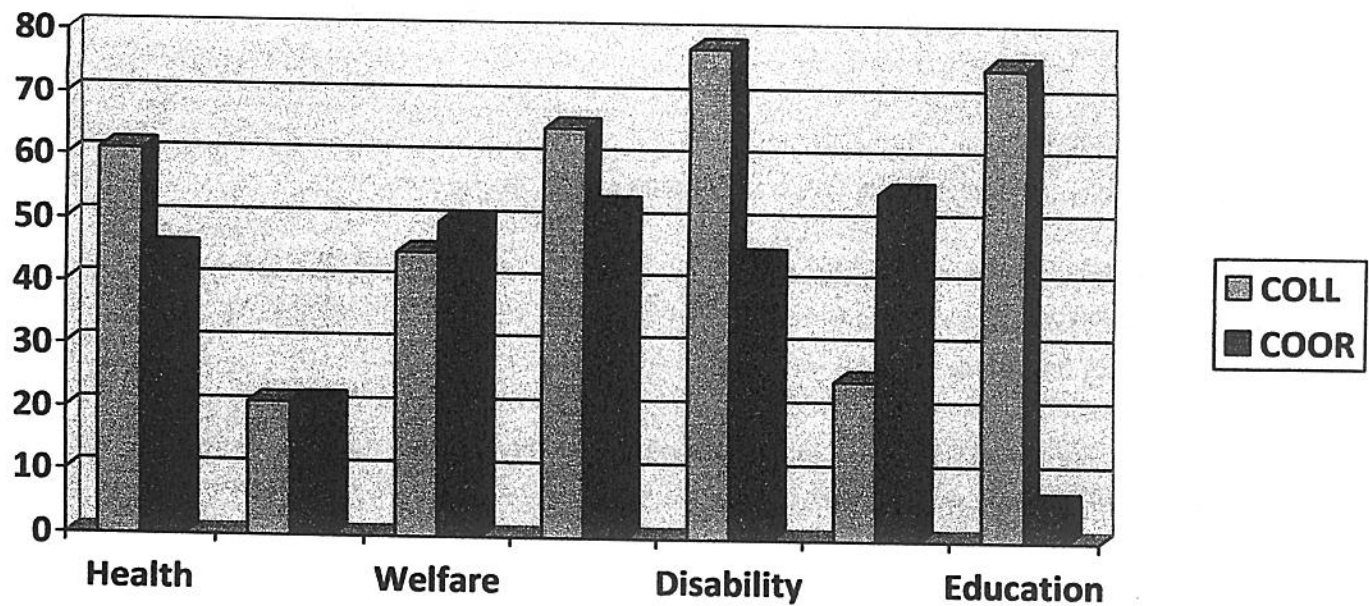
- Higher Education Programs at 45%

Transition-Relationship w/LEA at 72.2%/16.7%

PD-TTA Network at 50%

- Higher Education at 57.9%

ECS-State QRIS at 52.6%/SAC -42.1%



Health-Mental Health Screenings/Medical Home Providers

Homeless-Local Homeless Liaisons/Housing Agencies

Welfare/Child Welfare-TANF/Local & County Welfare Agencies

Family Literacy-Public Libraries/English Language Learners

Disability Services-Local Part B Providers/Non-Head Start Councils

Community Services-Providers of Emergency Services/Child Abuse & Domestic Violence

Education/School Readiness=State-Funded Pre-K/MOU w/Local Agencies

The items on the following pages have been identified based on the eleven areas of the HSSCO Needs Assessment Survey. The areas identified on the following pages were rated 30 percent for cooperation and no working relationship with other agencies. The ratings for extremely difficult and difficult things to accomplish and other issues identified by EHS/Head Start grantees was set at 25% for the cut-off in needing assistance. All items will be used to address areas for improvement in the five-year strategic plan. Goals and objectives will be established to address each of these areas.

Please refer to the established timeline at the end of this report for details on the completion of the 2012 - 2017 Strategic Plan. Moving forward, the HSSCO will continue to work from the 2009 strategic plan and start the new plan in 2012.

Needs Assessment Areas to be Addressed

Health Care

1. State agencies providing mental health prevention and treatment services
2. WIC
3. Children's Health Education Providers
4. Parent Health Education Providers
5. Home Visiting Providers
6. Community Health Centers
7. Program services related to physical fitness and obesity prevention

Difficult to Extremely Difficult to Complete:

8. Linking Children to dental homes that serve young children
9. Assisting families to get transportation to appointments
10. Getting full participation and commitment from HAC
11. Exchanging information on roles and resources with medical, dental, & other providers regarding health care

Other Issues:

- It is extremely difficult to find therapist to work with children with disabilities in Southeast and Southwest Arkansas. Families also have to travel over 80 miles (one way) to see a pediatrician.
- There is a shortage of primary care physicians in Northwest Arkansas.
- Getting parents' cooperation in keeping their appointments for annual physical visits.
- Getting health care providers to do lead testing on children (4).
- We have no dental provider in our rural area and most dentist will not accept Medicaid (3).
- We have no nurse to assist onsite or in our county to assist with special needs children {Insulin Shots & diabetic testing}

Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness

1. Local McKinney-Vento homeless liaison
2. Local Housing agencies and planning groups servicing families experiencing homelessness
3. School district Title I Director (if applicable, and if Title I funds are being used to support early care and education programs for children experiencing homelessness)

Difficult to Extremely Difficult to Complete:

4. Engaging community partners, including the local McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison, in conducting staff cross training and planning activities
5. In coordination with LEA, developing and implementing family outreach and support efforts under McKinney-Vento and transition planning for children experiencing homelessness

Other Issues (Homelessness):

- Outreach efforts have resulted in very few homeless families applying for Head start services.
- Defining Homelessness per McKinney-Vento
- There are no funds for immediate assistance for homelessness.
- Having parents to make contact with staff before homelessness occurs (evictions).
- There are no homeless shelters in our area to provide services, nor are there rehab. centers in our county.
- Transportation is not available to the homeless
- Having the proper documentation in a timely manner.

Welfare/Child Welfare

1. Local TANF Services
2. Economic and Community Development Councils
3. State Child Welfare agency
4. State Children's Trust Agency

Other Issues:

- The majority of our families are working and very few receive TANF.
- Treatment of families applying for services continue to be a concern.
- Office of Child Support Enforcement does not provide effective and efficient services and Child abuse and Neglect reports does not get the proper response.
- Child care is expensive and most parents cannot afford quality child care.
- Some agencies request information, but do not assist other agencies when needed.
- Some DHS offices are very cooperative and some are not.
- The time element for contacting relevant agencies, screenings, and assessing information is a concern.

Child Care

1. State Agency for Child Care
2. Child Care R & R Agencies
3. Local Child Care program to support access to full-year, full-day services
4. Higher education programs/services/ resources related to child care (e.g., lab schools, student interns, cross-training)

Other Issues:

- Providing services or access to services for extended hours, particularly with EHS, has been extremely difficult.
- There is a great need for more infant and toddler care.
- The reduction loss of the voucher system has created additional hardships to our families.
- There is a need for funding to pay for extended day services, transportation, and year-round services.
- The "Confidentiality factors" can be somewhat intimidating .

Family Literacy

1. State and local family literacy programs
2. Employment and training programs
3. English Language Learner programs
4. Services to promote parent/child literacy interactions
5. School Libraries
6. Public/Private sources that provide book donations or funding for books
7. Museums
8. Reading Readiness programs
9. Higher education programs/services/ resources related to family literacy (e.g., grant projects, student interns, cross-training, etc.)
10. Providers of services for children and families who are English Language Learners

Other Issues:

- Reading is Fundamental funds has been cut.
- We need more resources.
- Finding the funds to purchase and maintain books for replacements.
- Family literacy services seems to be a "back-burner" issue in attitudes, culture, and issue-recognition value.

Services for Children with Disabilities

1. State Lead Agency for Part C
2. Other Federally funded programs for families of children with disabilities (e.g., Parent Training & Information Center, Family Voices, Maternal and Child Health, Protection & Advocacy agency, Special Medical Services, etc.)
3. Other State-funded programs for children with disabilities and their families (e.g., developmental services agencies)
4. University/community college programs/services related to children with disabilities (e.g., University Centers for Excellence on Disability/others)

Other Issues:

- In some areas of the state, it is extremely hard to get Part C services (Southeast Arkansas). There are also locations where there are no therapy services available for children under 3 years old.
- Transportation in Northwest Arkansas is an issue; no mass or public transit system.
- Identifying Part C programs that provide OT/PR at site-level.
- Ensuring that we receive timely updates on referrals.
- Parents keeping their appointment times.
- Parents would like for their child or children to receive services year (12 months) round instead of services being interrupted during the summer.
- The logistics of finding convenient meeting times, sites, dates with all parties is a concern.
- It is very difficult to work with Coop.
- It is a problem for us in receiving children's evaluations on time.

Community Services

1. Law Enforcement
2. Providers of substance abuse prevention/treatment services
3. Private resources geared toward prevention/intervention (faith-based, business, foundations, shelters, etc.)
4. Providers of emergency services (e.g., Red Cross, state agency responsible for large-scale emergency plans)
5. Provider of services to military families

Other Issues:

- Due to budgetary constraints, service hours of operation are not always optimal for working families.
- It is an issue for families with crisis situations (housing, utilities cut off, etc.)... they always get the response, "no funds available at this time, please check with us later."
- Transportation for families who have to travel outside of the county to receive services.
- There is no women and children homeless shelter...
- It is an issue to establish a "real working relationship" with various community service agencies.

Education

Difficult to Extremely Difficult to Complete:

1. Developing MOU's with publicly funded pre-school programs
2. Other elements mutually agreed to by the parties to the MOU

Other Issues:

- Building closed for school trainings that do not affect our center calendar.
- There is a need for more time for dialogue between pre-k and public school (K) teachers.
- To have a working and cooperative relationship with state agencies that could be groomed by respect, sharing, and unity of purpose.
- Joint training is difficult due to scheduling because child care and Head Start do not have the same days off to do this.
- ABC will fill their slots prior to referring qualifying families to Head Start.

School Transition & Alignment with K-12

Difficult to Extremely Difficult to Complete:

1. Coordinating transportation with LEAs
2. Coordination with LEA in meeting pre-school needs – JD - (Alignment with Pre-K and K)

Other Issues (Transition):

- It is difficult to arrange time for each Head Start teacher to meet with LEA teachers.
- There is an issue with transferring children files to the public school. The district notifies the parents, but the center does not hear back from the parent.
- Face-to-face communication with LEAs is an issue.
- Arkansas is moving to common core standards and HS is waiting for more information.

Professional Development

1. Online Courses programs
2. Child Care R& R Network
3. National Centers
4. Cultural & Linguistic Responsiveness
5. Parent, Family, & Community Engagement
6. Quality Teaching & Learning
7. EHS National Resource Center
8. Program Management & Fiscal Operations
9. Center on Health

Difficult to Extremely Difficult to Complete:

10. Accessing early childhood education degree programs in the community
11. Accessing scholarships and other financial support for professional development programs/activities (e.g., T.E.A.C.H., Early Childhood
12. Staff release time to attend professional development activities

Other Issues:

- Time away from the classrooms is always an issue for front-line staff.
- Access to Online classes is an issue.
- Identifying budget –friendly in-service locations.
- We live in a rural area and it is hard sometimes to access professional development activities and resources.
- I wish Head Start would offer FREE on demand webinars for all the things they want teachers and staff to learn (Ex. CLASS).
- We need more funding for professional development. There needs to be more ECE courses offered through online.
- Availability of courses.
- Have not access national centers.

Early Childhood Systems Development

1. State Advisory Council (SAC), State Early Learning Council
2. State efforts to unify early childhood data systems (program assessment data)

Other Issues:

- It would be helpful if we all used the same Management System for easier processing of data and tracking.
- State has its own programs in place, whereby individual Head Start programs have to make use with what is available. Tremendous workload at the local level.

HSSCO, J. Dedman, 2011

