



MARYLAND HEAD START STATE COLLABORATION OFFICE NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT 2015

MARYLAND HEAD START STATE COLLABORATION OFFICE
Tresa Hanna, DIRECTOR

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INTRODUCTION

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) oversees a variety of programs focused on improving school readiness for all young children in the state. One important component of MSDE's commitment to closing the gap in achievement for young children growing up in poverty is its continued collaboration with and support of the Head Start program. Since July 2003, the state's Head Start Collaboration Office (MDHSSCO) has been housed at MSDE. MSDE has been the administrator of the Head Start collaboration grant and provides technical assistance in aligning Head Start services with those of early learning programs in the public schools.

To meet the requirements of the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, MDHSSCO and the Maryland Head Start Association (MHSA) jointly develop the annual needs assessment and updates of Early Head Start and Head Start programs in Maryland. The results of the assessment process are used to develop an updated strategic plan.

HEAD START STATE COLLABORATION GRANTS

Since 1990, the Office of Head Start has funded Head Start State Collaboration grants to support the development of multi-agency and public/private partnerships at the state level. States are to use these grant funds to:

- (i) assist Head Start agencies to collaborate with entities involved in State and local planning processes to better meet the needs of low-income children from birth to school entry, and their families;
- (ii) assist Head Start agencies to coordinate activities with the State agency responsible for administering the State program carried out under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.) and entities providing resource and referral services in the State, to make full-working-day and full calendar year services available to children;
- (iii) promote alignment of curricula used in Head Start programs and continuity of services with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and, as appropriate, State early learning standards;
- (iv) promote better linkages between Head Start agencies and other child and family agencies, including agencies that provide health, mental health, or family services, or other child or family supportive services, such as services provided under section 619 or part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.); and
- (v) carry out the activities of the State Director of Head Start Collaboration authorized in paragraph (4).

Sec. 642B. of H.S. Act of 2007)

HEAD START PROGRAMS IN MARYLAND

In federal fiscal year 2014, there were 46 grantees and delegates of Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Federal grant funds totaling \$90,549,642 were awarded to serve 10,794 children and pregnant women. Four (4) grantees do not provide direct services, but have delegate agencies that provide services. Head Start Programs serve children in all 24 jurisdictions within the state; however, Early Head Start is only found in 13 counties and Baltimore City. Three (3) grantees do not provide direct services, and have delegate agencies or contracted providers. Head Start Programs serve children in all 24 jurisdictions within the state; however, Early Head Start is only found in 13 counties and Baltimore City. In December 2014, three (3) grantees were awarded \$3,400,000 in Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grants.

All programs follow the national Head Start Performance Standards for providing quality services to children and families. Grantees and delegate agencies include public school districts, community action agencies (CAAs), local government agencies which are not CAAs, private non-profits, and organizations with faith-based affiliations.

Enrollment data from the 2013-14 Maryland Program Information Report shows a cumulative enrollment of 12,425 children and pregnant women for the year. Over 10,300 of the children served were ages 3-5, and over 8,500 families were income eligible. Other categories of eligibility were:

- Receipt of public assistance: 2,249
- Children with diagnosed disabilities: 1,373 - Foster children: 172
- Homeless children: 524

Program Options 2013-14

Center-based Option Full Day (5 days per week) **3,704**

Center-based Option Full Day (5 days per week, full-working-day) **1,117**

Center-based Option Full Day (5 days per week, full-working-day, full -year) **1,071**

Center-based Option Part Day (5 days per week) **4,153**

Center-based Option Part Day (5 days per week, double session) **351**

Center-based Option Full Day (4 days per week) **66**

Center-based Option Part Day (4 days per week) **1,742**

Center-based Option Part Day (4 days per week, double session) **1,237**

Combination Option **0**

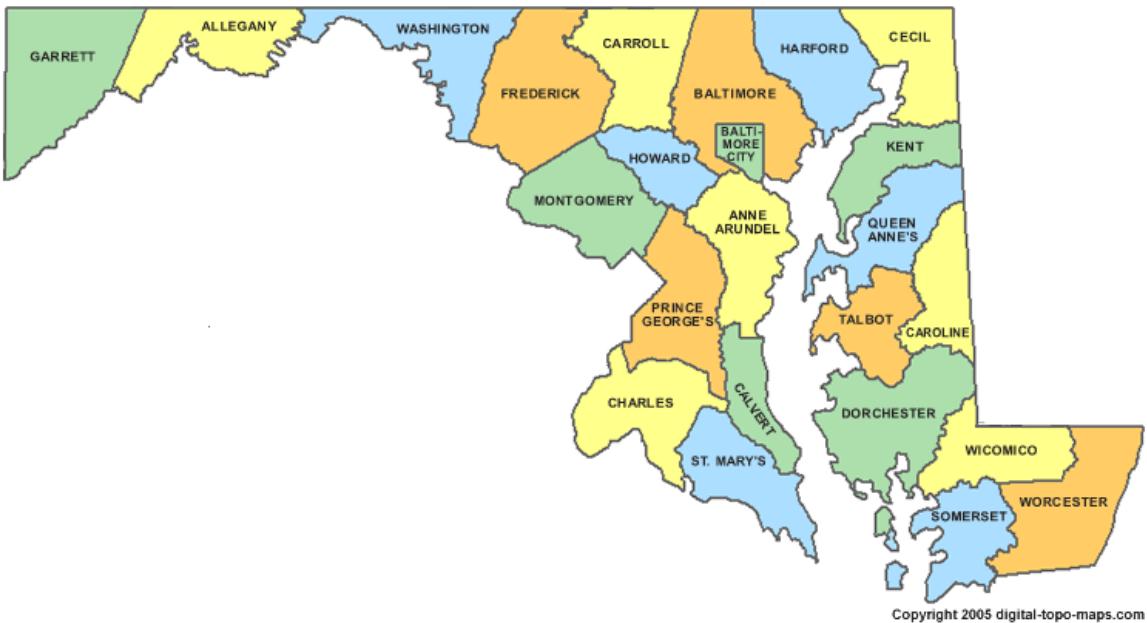
Family Child Care Option **27**

Family Child Care Option (full-working-day) **27**

Family Child Care Option (full-working-day, full-year) **27**

Home-based Option **529**

Locally Designed Option **296**



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In addition to the base federal grants, Head Start grantees are required to provide 20% of the program budget from non-federal share, or in-kind, sources. The collective in-kind goal of Maryland Head Start Programs is over \$22 million.

One of the local contributions to Head Start programs comes from supplemental state funds through the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). MSDE makes available grants to expand the number of high quality, comprehensive, programs available to children across the state. In 2013-2014, the appropriation for the Head Start and Early Head Start Supplemental was \$1.8 million.

MSDE's Division of Early Childhood Development (DECD) has also helped promote Head Start participation in the Maryland Quality Rating Improvement System known as Maryland EXCELS. Around the State, the DECD Quality Support Specialists and the Maryland Child Care Resource and Referral Network technical assistance staff have worked with Head Start programs to facilitate their enrollment.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT UPDATE PROJECT

The **Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007**, requires that each year “*the State Director of Head Start Collaboration shall conduct an assessment that addresses the needs of Head Start agencies in the State with respect to collaboration, coordination and alignment of services, and alignment of curricula and assessments used in Head Start programs with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and, as appropriate, State early learning standards.*”

In 2015, the purpose of this Needs Assessment project is to gather information from Head Start and Early Head Start programs to provide an updated on previous years. This assessment will serve as a tool in updating the state-wide Strategic Plan that guides the efforts of MDHSSCO in determining how to better assist local Head Start and Early Head Start programs in improving collaboration with local community partners.

METHODOLOGY

This assessment update process consisted of an abbreviated version of the Needs Assessment Survey tool administered online to grantees. The eleven federal priority areas for HSSCOs were used as the foundation for questions within the survey. Respondents were asked to identify challenges and resources, to make general observations, and to give suggestions of possible strategies MDHSSCO and MHSA might employ to mitigate the challenges cited. Open ended questions were used to collect qualitative data in various priority areas.

SURVEY RESULTS

Population

At the time of the survey, there were twenty-one (21) grantees with sixteen (16) delegates or contracted providers. Of these groups, twenty-three (23) participants entered the online survey tool, however, only seventeen (17) resulted in usable participants. The criterion for elimination for the survey population was based on whether the participant failed to answer at least one of the open ended questions. If a participant answered at least one question, even if they failed to include their name or title, they were included in the results.

1	Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency
2	Baltimore City Head Start - Provider, Union Baptist
3	Baltimore City Head Start - Provider, Dayspring
4	Calvert County Public Schools
5	Catholic Charities Early Head Start Harford County
6	Catholic Charities Head Start of Baltimore City
7	Catholic Charities Head Start/Early Head Start of Carroll County
8	CentroNia
9	Family Services, Inc.
10	Head Start of Washington County
11	Allegany County HRDC
12	Lourie Center for Children's Social & Emotional Wellness
13	Maryland Family Network, Inc
14	Maryland Rural Development Corporation Head Start program
15	Montgomery County Head Start
16	Prince George's County Public Schools
17	SHORE UP!, Inc.
18	St. Mary's County Public Schools
19	Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee, Inc.
20	St Vincent de Paul of Baltimore
21	Y of Central Maryland - Baltimore City
22	Y of Central Maryland - Baltimore County
23	YMCA of Frederick County

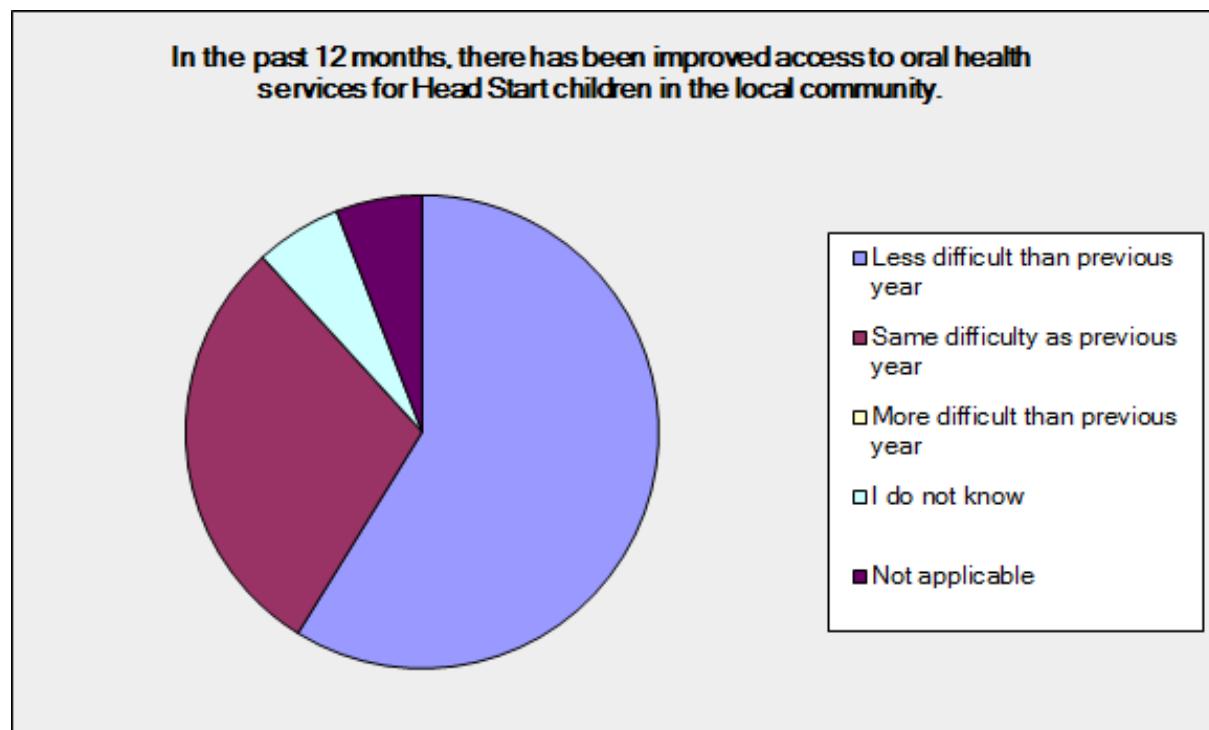
Results by Content Area

The following are the results of the survey by the eleven key activity areas. Summaries of the responses to the survey tool are listed first, followed by the results of the open ended questions. The results are presented as they were written with no corrections for spelling or grammar.

Health Services

Survey results

In the past 12 months, there has been improved access to oral health services for Head Start children in the local community.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less difficult than previous year	58.8%	10
Same difficulty as previous year	29.4%	5
More difficult than previous year	0.0%	0
I do not know	5.9%	1
Not applicable	5.9%	1
Comments:		5
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

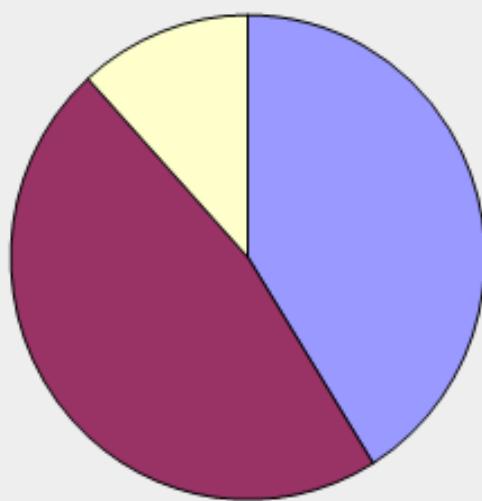


Health Services, continued

In the past 12 months, there has been improved the access to mental health services for Head Start children in the local community.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less difficult than previous year	41.2%	7
Same difficulty as previous year	47.1%	8
More difficult than previous year	11.8%	2
I do not know	0.0%	0
Not applicable	0.0%	0
Comments:		4
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

In the past 12 months, there has been improved the access to mental health services for Head Start children in the local community.



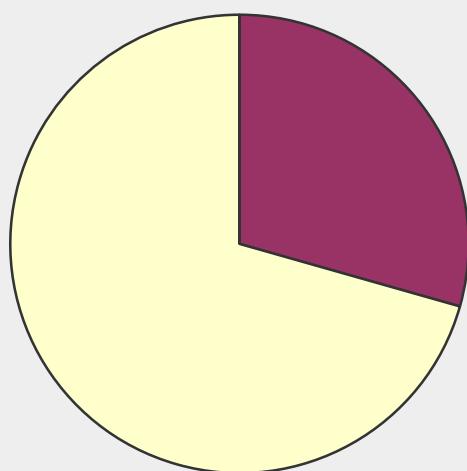
- Less difficult than previous year
- Same difficulty as previous year
- More difficult than previous year
- I do not know
- Not applicable

Health Services, continued

In the past 12 months, Head Start family and staff knowledge on health services has improved

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than in previous year	0.0%	0
Same as in previous year	29.4%	5
More than in previous year	70.6%	12
I do not know	0.0%	0
Not applicable	0.0%	0
Comments:		2
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

In the past 12 months, Head Start family and staff knowledge on health services has improved



- Less than in previous year
- Same as in previous year
- More than in previous year
- I do not know
- Not applicable

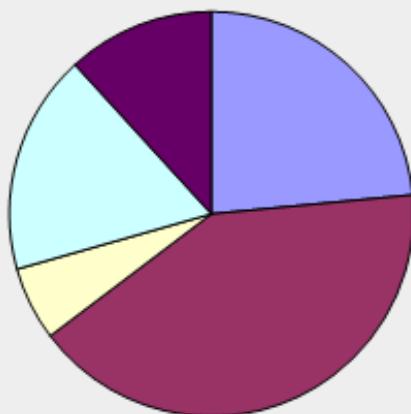
Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness

Survey Results

In the past 12 months, collaboration has been promoted and resources have been leveraged between Head Start programs and state and local McKinney-Vento liaisons and identify other possible resources.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less difficult than previous year	23.5%	4
Same difficulty as previous year	41.2%	7
More difficult than previous year	5.9%	1
I do not know	17.6%	3
Not applicable	11.8%	2
Comments:		2
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

In the past 12 months, collaboration has been promoted and resources have been leveraged between Head Start programs and state and local McKinney-Vento liaisons and identify other possible resources.



- Less difficult than previous year
- Same difficulty as previous year
- More difficult than previous year
- I do not know
- Not applicable

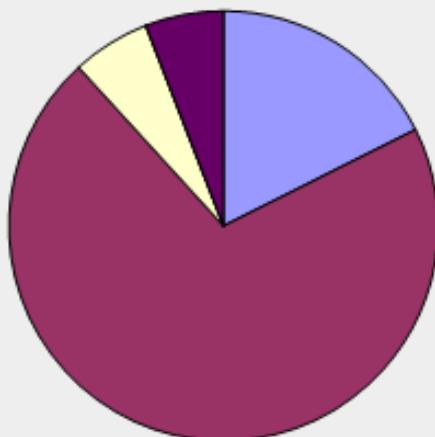
Welfare/Child Welfare

Survey Results

In the past 12 months, collaboration and partnerships have been promoted between Head Start programs and local Department of Social Services programs, including Foster Care, child welfare, TANF, and child care subsidies.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less difficult than previous year	17.6%	3
Same difficulty as previous year	70.6%	12
More difficult than previous year	5.9%	1
I do not know	0.0%	0
Not applicable	5.9%	1
Comments:		4
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

In the past 12 months, collaboration and partnerships have been promoted between Head Start programs and local Department of Social Services programs, including Foster Care, child welfare, TANF, and child care subsidies.



- Less difficult than previous year
- Same difficulty as previous year
- More difficult than previous year
- I do not know
- Not applicable

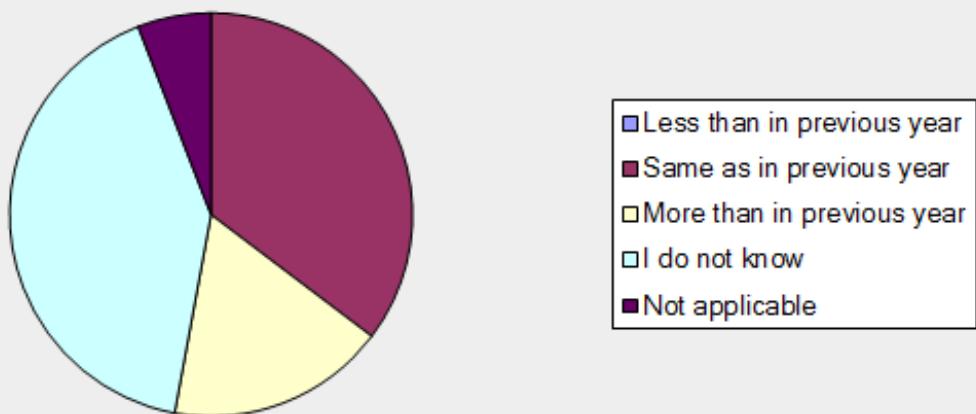
Child Care

Survey Results

In the past 12 months, the Maryland Head Start State Collaboration Office has promoted improved opportunities for working parents to have access to child care services that meet their needs.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than in previous year	0.0%	0
Same as in previous year	35.3%	6
More than in previous year	17.6%	3
I do not know	41.2%	7
Not applicable	5.9%	1
Comments:		1
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

In the past 12 months, the Maryland Head Start State Collaboration Office has promoted improved opportunities for working parents to have access to child care services that meet their needs.

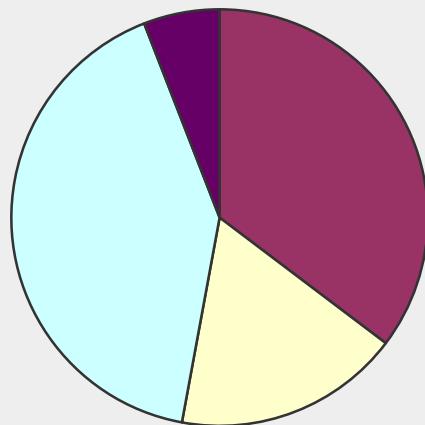


Child Care, continued

In the past 12 months, the Maryland Head Start State Collaboration Office has promoted improved opportunities for working parents to have access to child care services that meet their needs.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than in previous year	0.0%	0
Same as in previous year	35.3%	6
More than in previous year	17.6%	3
I do not know	41.2%	7
Not applicable	5.9%	1
Comments:		1
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

In the past 12 months, the Maryland Head Start State Collaboration Office has promoted improved opportunities for working parents to have access to child care services that meet their needs.



- Less than in previous year
- Same as in previous year
- More than in previous year
- I do not know
- Not applicable

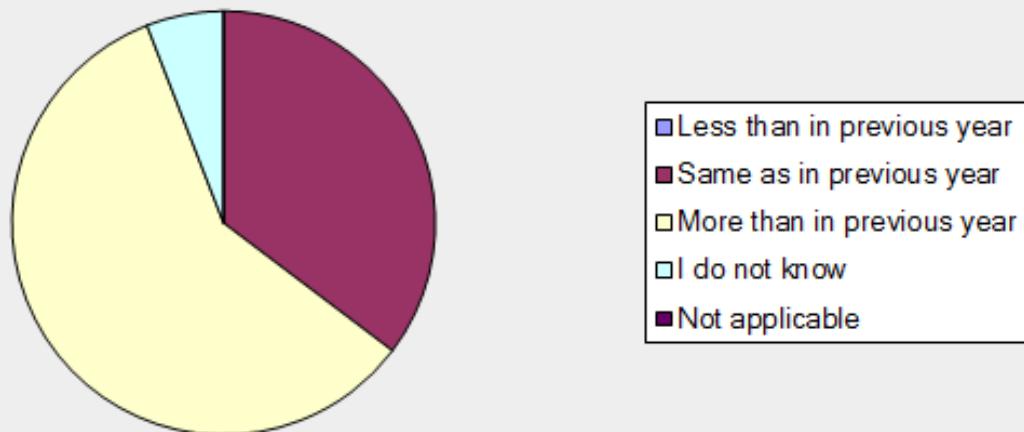
Family Literacy

Survey Results

In the past 12 months, increased access to literacy services for Head Start families, including with libraries, adult literacy programs, museums and other relevant resources have been promoted.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than in previous year	0.0%	0
Same as in previous year	35.3%	6
More than in previous year	58.8%	10
I do not know	5.9%	1
Not applicable	0.0%	0
Comments:		2
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

In the past 12 months, increased access to literacy services for Head Start families, including with libraries, adult literacy programs, museums and other relevant resources have been promoted.



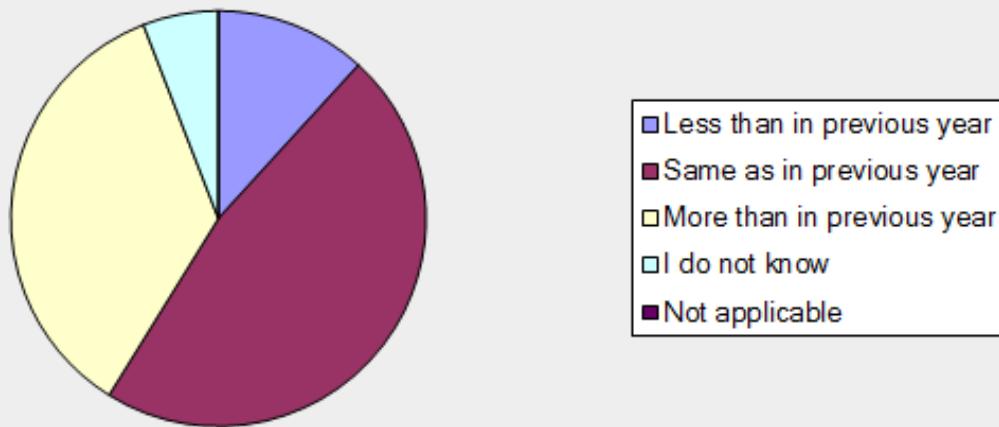
Services for Children with Disabilities

Survey Results

In the past 12 months, the level of partnership between Head Start Programs and State and local Infants and Toddlers Programs (Part C) and Preschool Special Education (Part B) has been promoted.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than in previous year	11.8%	2
Same as in previous year	47.1%	8
More than in previous year	35.3%	6
I do not know	5.9%	1
Not applicable	0.0%	0
Comments:		2
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

In the past 12 months, the level of partnership between Head Start Programs and State and local Infants and Toddlers Programs (Part C) and Preschool Special Education (Part B) has been promoted.

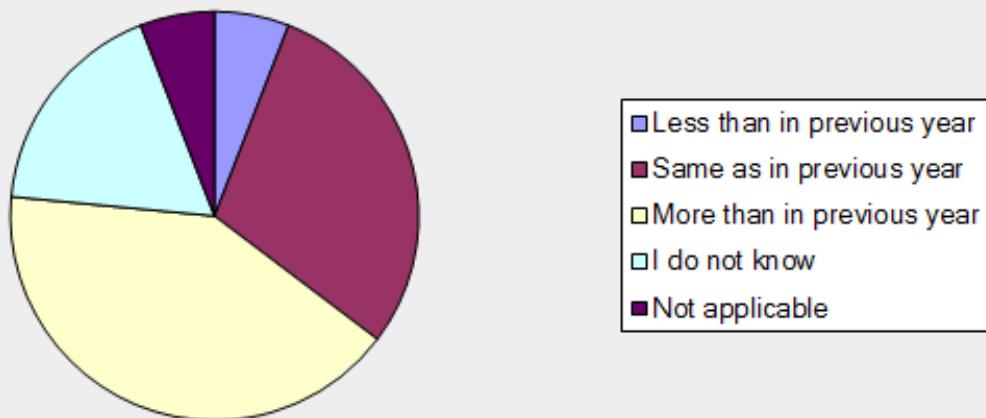


Services for Children with Disabilities, continued

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office has facilitated improved relevant professional development and higher education opportunities for staff working with children with disabilities

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than in previous year	5.9%	1
Same as in previous year	29.4%	5
More than in previous year	41.2%	7
I do not know	17.6%	3
Not applicable	5.9%	1
Comments:		2
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office has facilitated improved relevant professional development and higher education opportunities for staff working with children with disabilities



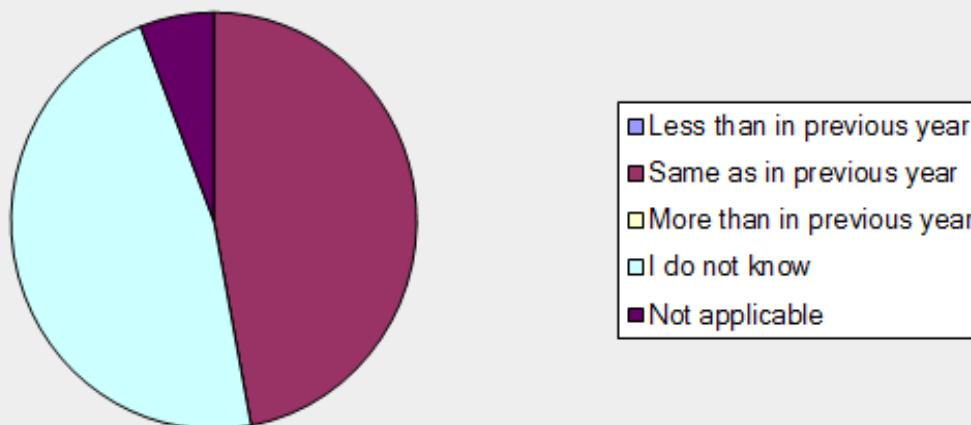
Community Services

Survey Results

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office encouraged the leveraging and sharing of resources by Head Start Programs and local community partners, including law enforcement agencies.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than in previous year	0.0%	0
Same as in previous year	47.1%	8
More than in previous year	0.0%	0
I do not know	47.1%	8
Not applicable	5.9%	1
Comments:		0
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office encouraged the leveraging and sharing of resources by Head Start Programs and local community partners, including law enforcement agencies.



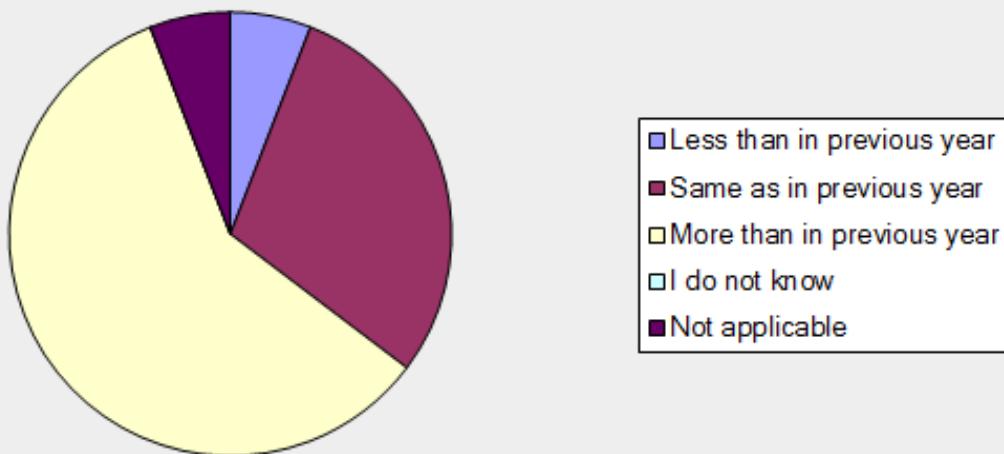
School Transitions and Alignment with K-12

Survey Results

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office has promoted the use of state preschool standards and accreditation of Head Start programs

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than in previous year	5.9%	1
Same as in previous year	29.4%	5
More than in previous year	58.8%	10
I do not know	0.0%	0
Not applicable	5.9%	1
Comments:		1
<i>answered question</i>		17
<i>skipped question</i>		6

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office has promoted the use of state preschool standards and accreditation of Head Start programs



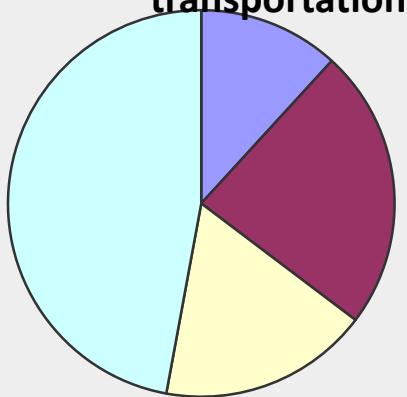
Education (School Readiness, Head Start-PreK Partnership Development)

Survey Results

In the past 12 months, my program has partnered with LEAs to facilitate seamless and supportive movement for children from Head Start to public schools, including joint outreach to parents and transportation coordination.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
No working relationship	11.8%	2
Cooperation	23.5%	4
Coordination	17.6%	3
Collaboration	47.1%	8
Comments:		6
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

In the past 12 months, my program has partnered with LEAs to facilitate seamless and supportive movement for children from Head Start to public schools, including joint outreach to parents and transportation coordination.



- No working relationship
- Cooperation
- Coordination
- Collaboration

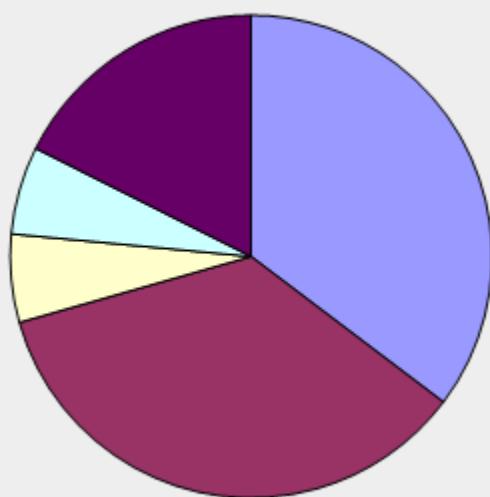
Education (School Readiness, Head Start-PreK Partnership Development), continued

Survey Results

In the past 12 months, local reviews and renewals of local agreements between Head Start programs and LEAs that are already in place and promote increased collaboration, to include joint staff development, parent involvement, alignment, transitions, and joint planning have been facilitated.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less difficult than previous year	35.3%	6
Same difficulty as previous year	35.3%	6
More difficult than previous year	5.9%	1
I do not know	5.9%	1
Not applicable	17.6%	3
Comments:		5
<i>answered question</i>		17
<i>skipped question</i>		6

In the past 12 months, local reviews and renewals of local agreements between Head Start programs and LEAs that are already in place have been facilitated



- Less difficult than previous year
- Same difficulty as previous year
- More difficult than previous year
- I do not know
- Not applicable

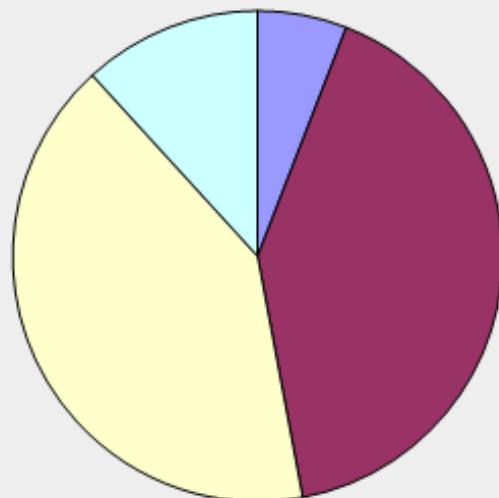
Professional Development

Survey Results

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office has supported projects and initiatives that enhance the education and professional development of Head Start staff, including participation in the State Credentialing Program and the Career and Professional Development Fund.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than in previous year	5.9%	1
Same as in previous year	41.2%	7
More than in previous year	41.2%	7
I do not know	11.8%	2
Not applicable	0.0%	0
Comments:		0
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State HeadStart Collaboration Office has supported projects and initiatives that enhance the education and professional development of Head Start staff.



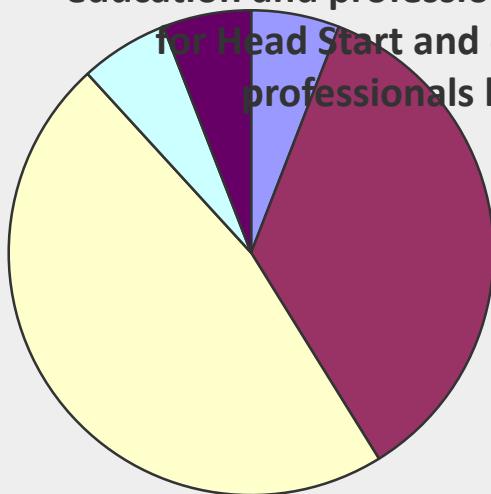
- Less than in previous year
- Same as in previous year
- More than in previous year
- I do not know
- Not applicable

Professional Development, continued

In the past 12 months, increased access to higher education and professional development opportunities for Head Start and early childhood education professionals have been promoted through Maryland Head Start State Collaboration Office resources and partnerships

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than in previous year	5.9%	1
Same as in previous year	35.3%	6
More than in previous year	47.1%	8
I do not know	5.9%	1
Not applicable	5.9%	1
Comments:		3
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

In the past 12 months, increased access to higher education and professional development opportunities for Head Start and early childhood education professionals have been promoted.



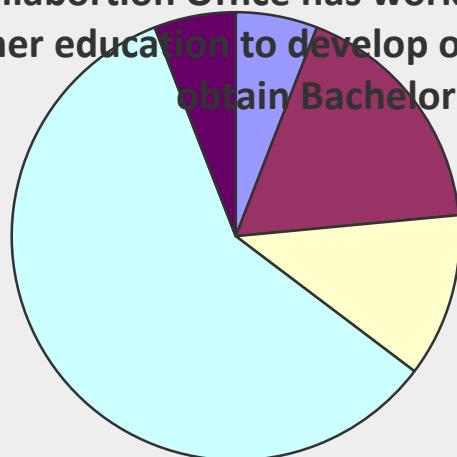
- Less than in previous year
- Same as in previous year
- More than in previous year
- I do not know
- Not applicable

Professional Development, continued

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office has worked with 4-year institutions of higher education to develop opportunities to obtain Bachelor's degree, including evening, weekend, and on-line courses and student teaching that are accepted in community settings.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than in previous year	5.9%	1
Same as in previous year	17.6%	3
More than in previous year	11.8%	2
I do not know	58.8%	10
Not applicable	5.9%	1
Comments:		1
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office has worked with institutions of higher education to develop opportunities for staff to obtain Bachelor's degrees



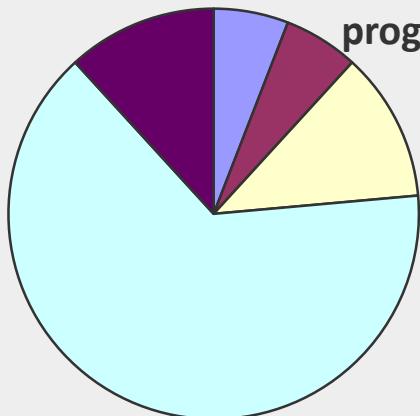
- Less than in previous year
- Same as in previous year
- More than in previous year
- I do not know
- Not applicable

Professional Development, continued

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office has worked with 4-year institutions of higher education and MSDE Teacher Certification Office to approve alternative teacher licensing programs.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than in previous year	5.9%	1
Same as in previous year	5.9%	1
More than in previous year	11.8%	2
I do not know	64.7%	11
Not applicable	11.8%	2
Comments:		0
<i>answered question</i>		17
<i>skipped question</i>		6

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office has worked with 4-year institutions of higher education and MSDE Teacher Certification Office to approve alternative teacher licensing programs.



- Less than in previous year
- Same as in previous year
- More than in previous year
- I do not know
- Not applicable

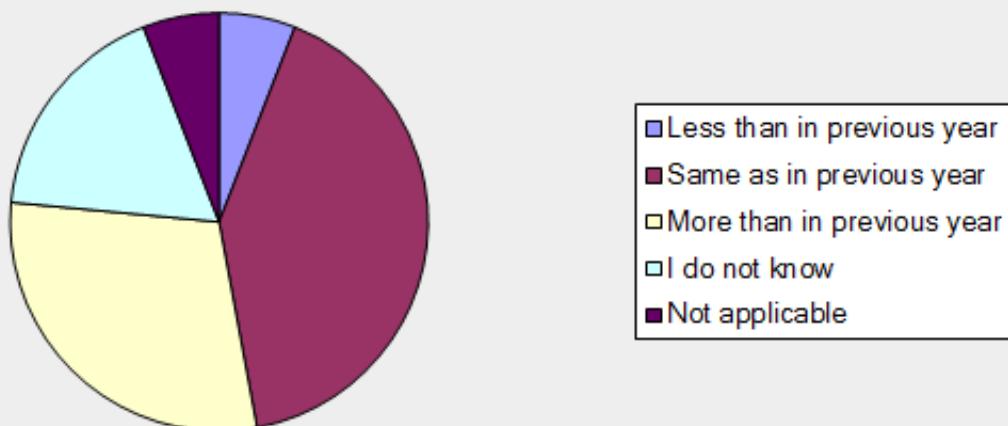
Early Childhood Systems Development

Survey Results

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office has encouraged Head Start and child care programs in sharing information regarding roles, resources, and children, including child specific data.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than in previous year	5.9%	1
Same as in previous year	41.2%	7
More than in previous year	29.4%	5
I do not know	17.6%	3
Not applicable	5.9%	1
<i>answered question</i>		17
<i>skipped question</i>		6

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office has encouraged Head Start and child care programs in sharing information regarding roles, resources, and children, including child specific data.

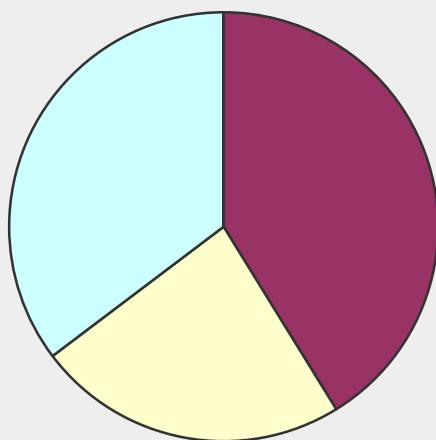


Early Childhood Systems Development, continued

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office has assisted in the development and implementation of the state-wide Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS).

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than in previous year	0.0%	0
Same as in previous year	41.2%	7
More than in previous year	23.5%	4
I do not know	35.3%	6
Not applicable	0.0%	0
Comments:		2
	<i>answered question</i>	17
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office has assisted in the development and implementation of the state-wide Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS).



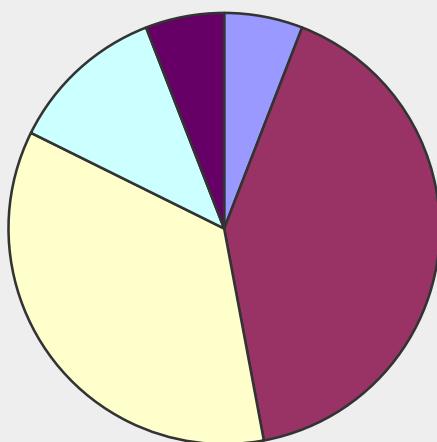
- Less than in previous year
- Same as in previous year
- More than in previous year
- I do not know
- Not applicable

Early Childhood Systems Development, continued

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office has supported Head Start programs in participating in the state QRIS (Maryland EXCELS) program and partnering in local early childcare systems.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than in previous year	5.9%	1
Same as in previous year	41.2%	7
More than in previous year	35.3%	6
I do not know	11.8%	2
Not applicable	5.9%	1
Comments:		2
<i>answered question</i>		17
<i>skipped question</i>		6

In the past 12 months, the Maryland State Head Start Collaboration Office has supported Head Start programs in participating in the state QRIS (Maryland EXCELS) program and partnering in local early childcare systems.



- Less than in previous year
- Same as in previous year
- More than in previous year
- I do not know
- Not applicable

OPEN ENDED RESPONSES

Unless otherwise indicated, references to Head Start are inclusive of Early Head Start

Please describe any issues you may have regarding any of the 11 key content areas.

- Staff training continues to be a challenge, ensuring all staff are receiving tiered professional development.
- QRIS should be aligned with Head Start and not require duplicative documentation. State child care subsidies must be increased to make quality child care accessible. State conferences should be advertised well in advance and avoid conflicting with NHSA conferences and other key early childhood conferences being held in our region.
- Working Child Care subsidies and not getting information about the changes to the system.
- We would like to emphasize the critical need to provide alternative resources to children whose behavior is a safety concern for the classroom setting. There is an immediate and pressing need for resources to address this growing population.
- additional training in Qris
- In effort to maintain MSDE accreditation there should be a liaison provided to Head Start programs to assist in the process and support the program until they maintain the accreditation. Head Start's performance standards do require that we keep specific paperwork to support specific requirement and so does MSDE but the paperwork is different and not recognized by MSDE so programs struggle with proving a particular requirement...

What is working well in your efforts in any of the 11 key content areas? Which of these efforts do you think may be helpful to other programs?

- Relationships with the LEA has improved, as many of our sites are located in schools. This provides a great opportunity for relationship building, access to educational resources, as well as seamless transition to pre-k & kindergarten, especially for children with disabilities.
- We have an exceptional relationship with the local Infants and Toddlers program and regularly have 15-20% of our children enrolled in early intervention.
- Community partnership and collaborations are strong.
- Collaboration between LEA and Head start has its difficulties however it is working better now than ever before.
- More communication between Head Start and especially Early Head Start programs.

Appendix A

Maryland Head Start State Collaboration Office Strategic Plan 2015-2016

The MDHSSCO Strategic Plan was originally developed based on the Needs Assessment survey and focus groups conducted by the MDHSSCO, the Maryland Head Start Association (MHSA) and the Chesapeake College contractor in spring and summer of 2009. This updated Strategic Plan is based on the results of the 2015 Needs Assessment process which further examined the resources and challenges that exist for the Maryland Head Start community.

The MDHSSCO subcontracts a portion of the federal collaboration grant funding to MHSA to assist with collaborative activities as indicated. Likewise, MDHSSCO and MHSA anticipate continuing to work in partnership with the Head Start Training and Technical Assistance Network (T&TA Network) leadership in implementing those strategies that incorporate training.

This Strategic Plan was developed by MDHSSCO Director, Linda Zang, and MHSA Executive Director, Monica Ortiz.

Goal: Improve the availability and access to quality, coordinated health services for Head Start children and families.

<p>Objectives:</p> <p>Objective 1: Improve the access to oral health services for Early Head Start and Head Start children.</p> <p>Objective 2: Improve the access to mental health services for Head Start children</p> <p>Objective 3: Improve parent and staff knowledge on health services</p> <p>Objective 4: Improve communication that is culturally sensitive</p>	<p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaborate with the State Dental Health Director & Dental Hygienist Liaison on activities and initiatives, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnering with the Maryland (MD) Association of Pediatric Dentists and their local members; • Partnering with Dental Hygienists Association; • Interfacing with local health departments; • Partnering with the University of Maryland School of Pediatric Dentistry. 2. Continue to actively participate on the Maryland Dental Action Coalition. 3. Increase the availability of Social and Emotional Foundations of Early Learning Training 4. Increase awareness of the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Project for mental health services 5. Create State-wide Health Advisory Committee
<p>Accountability:</p>	<p>Other Resources: Maryland Dental Association; Maryland Association of Dental Hygienists; the Oral Health Office in the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Early Childhood Mental Health Steering Committee</p>

Goal: Improve the role Head Start Programs play in establishing linkages and coordinating services for homeless children and families.

<p>Objectives:</p> <p>Objective 1: Promote collaboration and the leveraging of resources between Head Start programs and State and local McKinney-Vento liaisons and other state and local programs.</p> <p>Objective 2: Increase the knowledge base of Head Start Staff on issues of and resources for children and families experiencing homelessness.</p>	<p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With the State McKinney-Vento Liaison and the Special Education/Early Intervention Division, promote cooperation between local McKinney- Vento liaisons, Title I Directors, public school special education professionals, and the Head Start community and develop strategies for improved access to services 2. Raise issues regarding children and families experiencing homelessness at State policy and local community meetings 3. Increase information to Head Start staff around the definition of homeless and accessing local resources 4. Incorporate more homelessness related topics into MHSA Conferences
<p>Accountability:</p>	<p>Other Resources: Infants and Toddlers Program, local health departments, local education agencies, State and local Homeless Liaisons</p>

<p>Goal: Improve the access of Head Start children and families to quality and timely social services.</p>	
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Objectives:

Promote collaboration and partnerships between Head Start Programs and local DSS programs, including Foster Care, TANF, and child care subsidies.

Strategies:

1. Identify those jurisdictions where improvements in cooperation/collaboration with Department of Social Services (DSS) and Head Start programs are needed
2. Improve communication regarding foster children and parents and Head Start.
3. Work with local grantees to partner with DSS on streamlining child care subsidy processes and encourage local agreements
4. Increase DSS training for Head Start Staff at Spring Conference and through cluster trainings and meetings
5. Increase cross training opportunities: (a) Request Head Start Staff attend DSS trainings (b) Invite DSS staff to Head Start trainings

Accountability:

Other Resources: DSS, Foster and child welfare programs, Office of Child Support, DLL Office, University of Maryland School of Social Work, Colleges and Universities

<p>Goal: Improve the quality of the early care and education system to meet child and family needs.</p>	
<p>Objectives:</p> <p>Objective 1: Head Start professionals and child care providers will have increased access to higher education and professional development opportunities.</p> <p>Objective 2: Improve the opportunities for working parents to have access to child care services that meet their needs.</p> <p>Objective 3: Assist Head Start and child care programs in improving the quality of their programs</p> <p>Objective 4: Promote accreditation of Head Start Programs.</p>	<p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> With the Maryland Head Start Association (MHSA), advocate for more opportunities for staff to obtain Associate and Bachelor degrees in Early Childhood Education With the Maryland Head Start Training and Technical Assistance Project, facilitate joint training and networking with local child care providers and other early childhood stakeholders. Encourage Head Start and child care partnerships through State committees and councils in order to provide more full-day year-round opportunities Increase relationships with child care organizations Encourage child care partners to attend MHSA trainings and conferences Work with child care providers to adopt State standards for early childhood education that are aligned with Head Start Child Outcomes Work with the Office of Child Care developing the MD EXCELS Program (QRIS) Assist in the implementation of the QRIS with Head Start Programs Support the use of the CLASS instrument for the MD EXCELS
<p>Accountability:</p>	<p>Other Resources: Montessori, Child Care Resource & Referral Centers, MD Association for the Education of Young Children, Child Care Associations, MSDE licensing, Judy Hoyer Partnerships, RTTT County Local ECA</p>

Goal: Expand family involvement in literacy and education activities.	
Objectives:	Strategies:
Head Start families will have increased access to literacy services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With state Judy Centers, seek collaboration opportunities with school libraries 2. Promote partnerships with libraries, community programs, and organizations that facilitate literacy activities including those for English Language Learners 3. Promote partnerships with Businesses and community organizations regarding book donations 4. Promote the Family Literacy component in the PCFE.
Accountability:	Other Resources: Judy Centers, Local Libraries, PNC Bank, Barnes & Noble, First Book, Maryland Child Care Resource Network, MSDE, Ready At Five, DLL Office,

Objectives:

Head Start families will have increased access to literacy services

Strategies:

1. With state Judy Centers, seek collaboration opportunities with school libraries
2. Promote partnerships with libraries, community programs, and organizations that facilitate literacy activities including those for English Language Learners
3. Promote partnerships with Businesses and community organizations regarding book donations
4. Promote the Family Literacy component in the PCFE.

Accountability:

Other Resources: Judy Centers, Local Libraries, PNC Bank, Barnes & Noble, First Book, Maryland Child Care Resource Network, MSDE, Ready At Five, DLL Office,

Goal: Improve the quality of services provided to children with disabilities.	
Objectives:	Strategies:

Objective 1: Improve the level of partnership between Head Start Programs and State and local Infants and Toddlers Programs (Part C) and Preschool Special Education (Part B).

Objective 2: Improve professional development opportunities for staff working with children with disabilities.

1. Promote the seamless transition of children with IFSPs and Individual Education Plans (IEP) into public schools
2. Facilitate the review and revisions of the current statewide agreement to improve quality and increase collaboration between programs serving children with disabilities and encourage local agreements
3. Increase collaboration with other agencies to further diversify the types of disabilities Head Start Programs are able to accommodate
4. Support networking of education and disabilities coordinators and other staff.

Accountability:	Other Resources: T&TA System, MSDE (Part C, 619, Part B IDEA), local education agencies, MSDE Special Education and Early Intervention Division, Parents Place of MD, Head Start Program FSW's
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Other Resources: T&TA System, MSDE (Part C, 619, Part B IDEA), local education agencies, MSDE Special Education and Early Intervention Division, Parents Place of MD, Head Start Program FSW's

<p>Goal: Improve community involvement in Head Start's early childhood education and family support services</p>	
<p>Objectives:</p> <p>Improve the leveraging and sharing of resources by Head Start Programs and local community partners</p>	<p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote and share with public school, libraries, health departments, museums, social service agencies and organizations, local law enforcement agencies, local businesses, and community organizations, information about the benefits of Head Start to families and the community 2. Work with Head Start programs to increase knowledge of and access to educational services for Head Start children and families 3. Encourage programs to seek agreements on sharing data and information on children and families 4. MHSA Annual Report to share with community at-large
<p>Accountability:</p>	<p>Other Resources: Maryland Child Care Resource Network, MD Community Action Partnerships, MSDE, Family Support Centers, child Care Resource Centers, MD Non-Profits Association, local departments of social services (DSS), Judy Centers, Colleges and Universities</p>

Goal: Contribute to the continuation and improvement of coordinated and comprehensive partnerships between Head Start Programs (not including Early Head Start) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs).

<p>Objectives:</p> <p>Objective 1: Facilitate the review and renewal of local agreements between Head Start programs and LEAs that are already in place and promote increased collaboration.</p> <p>Objective 2: Improve the opportunities for working parents to have access to full-day early care and education services that meet their needs.</p> <p>Objective 3: Promote participation in Maryland EXCELS by Head Start Programs.</p>	<p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage basing local agreements on the state agreement between the Maryland Head Start Association and MSDE that addresses joint planning, joint staff development, articulation, parent involvement, and on-going communication. 2. Promote expansion of local partnerships to involve community programs as well as prekindergarten, including Part B, Part C, Title I, school facilities, and school principals 3. Promote coordination between LEAs and Head Start, including Judy Centers when applicable, on joint responsibilities for curriculum alignment and transition 4. Educate Head Start staff and programs on the benefits and processes of national and state accreditation 5. Provide information on incentives to support participation in Maryland EXCELS, accreditation, and the MSDE sponsored Program Administration Scale. 6. Promote the application of the alignment of the prekindergarten-12 state curriculum and the Head Start Developmental Outcomes Framework to classroom instruction
<p>Accountability:</p>	<p>Other Resources: Local educational agencies, MSDE, Head Start Programs, Judy Hoyer Centers, Infants and Toddlers</p>

Goal: To support family and child transitions from Head Start programs to public schools.

<p>Objectives:</p> <p>Objective 1: Continue to facilitate the renewal of local agreements between Head Start programs and LEAs that are already in place and promote increased collaboration.</p> <p>Objective 2: To partner with LEAS to facilitate seamless and supportive movement for children from Head Start to public schools</p>	<p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage local agreements that address joint planning, joint staff development, articulation, and parent engagement 2. Encourage the inclusion of transition activities in local school readiness agreements, including joint planning, child and family visits to public schools, teacher visits to Head Start programs, and the sharing of child specific information on accepted forms 3. Promote coordination between LEAs and Head Start, including Judy Centers when applicable, on joint responsibilities for curriculum alignment and transitions, including for children with disabilities 4. Promote the increase of joint activities between LEA's and Head Start Centers prior to the transition time, including joint training 5. Promote the increase of training for staff and parents on working with children with many types of disabilities and on transitions for those children
<p>Accountability:</p>	<p>Other Resources: Local educational agencies, MSDE, Head Start Programs, Judy Hoyer Centers</p>

Goal: Contribute to the coordination of a state-wide professional development system.

<p>Objectives:</p> <p>Objective 1: Support projects and initiatives that enhance the education and professional development of Head Start staff.</p> <p>Objective 2: To assist in the development and implementation of the professional development parts of the state-wide quality rating improvement system (Maryland EXCELS).</p>	<p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct the Head Start community to resources that list available professional development opportunities, such as the Statewide Clearinghouse Calendar 2. Work with the Maryland Head Start Training and Technical Assistance Project and the Maryland Head Start Association to create training opportunities 3. Disseminate information on the Maryland Family Network and Maryland Public Television's development of online course work to meet child care licensing requirements 4. Continue to work with the Consortium of Early Childhood Coordinators in Two and Four-Year Colleges to improve degree opportunities for Head Start staff 5. Disseminate information on MSDE's Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund and reimbursement for completing Core of Knowledge courses through the credentialing program 6. Promote changes in college and MSDE teacher certification programs to allow student teaching in alternative settings 7. Identify "Hot Topics" among Head Start Programs to determine high need training subjects 8. Educate and facilitate the participation of Early Head Start, Head Start, and child
<p>Accountability:</p>	<p>Other Resources: MSDE, Head Start Programs, the Maryland Consortium of Early Childhood Faculty, Maryland Public Television, MD T&TA Center, Judy Centers, Home Visiting Coalition, Head Start National</p>

Goal: Increase the awareness of and participation in the MD EXCELS (state QRIS) Program.	
Objectives:	Strategies:

Objective 1: Support projects and initiatives that educate Head Start and Child Care Community on the MD EXCELS Program.

Objective 2: Support the inclusion of processes and procedures that facilitate the inclusion of already established Head Start Performance Standards as aligned and acceptable indicators in MD EXCELS.

1. Provide updates on the MD EXCELS Program to Head Start Programs at meetings and conferences.
2. Continue to participate in the MD Research Advisory Group.
3. Participate in MD EXCELS related workgroups.
4. Facilitate meetings to address how Head Start will be included in MD EXCELS

Accountability:	Other Resources: MSDE, RAG, Head Start Programs, Home Visiting Coalition
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Other Resources: MSDE, RAG, Head Start Programs, Home Visiting Coalition