

(1) The parents wish to enroll the child,

(2) The child meets the Head Start age and income eligibility criteria,

(3) Head Start is an appropriate placement according to the child's IEP, and

(4) The program has space to enroll more children, even though the program has made ten percent of its enrollment opportunities available to children with disabilities. In that case children who have a disability and non-disabled children would compete for the available enrollment opportunities.

(d) The grantee must access resources and plan for placement options, such as dual placement, use of resource staff and training so that a child with a disability for whom Head Start is an appropriate placement according to the IEP is not denied enrollment because of:

(1) Staff attitudes and/or apprehensions;

(2) Inaccessibility of facilities;

(3) Need to access additional resources to serve a specific child;

(4) Unfamiliarity with a disabling condition or special equipment, such as a prosthesis; and

(5) Need for personalized special services such as feeding, suctioning, and assistance with toileting, including catheterization, diapering, and toilet training.

(e) The same policies governing Head Start program eligibility for other children, such as priority for those most in need of the services, apply to children with disabilities. Grantees also must take the following factors into account when planning enrollment procedures:

(1) The number of children with disabilities in the Head Start service area including types of disabilities and their severity;

(2) The services and resources provided by other agencies; and

(3) State laws regarding immunization of preschool children. Grantees must observe applicable State laws which usually require that children entering State preschool programs complete immunizations prior to or within thirty days after entering to reduce the spread of communicable diseases.

(f) The recruitment effort of a Head Start grantee must include recruiting children who have severe disabilities, including children who have been previously identified as having disabilities.

Subpart D—Health Services Performance Standards

§ 1308.6 Assessment of children.

(a) The disabilities coordinator must be involved with other program staff throughout the full process of assessment of children, which has three steps:

(1) All children enrolled in Head Start are screened as the first step in the assessment process;

(2) Staff also carry out on-going developmental assessment for all enrolled children throughout the year to determine progress and to plan program activities;

(3) Only those children who need further specialized assessment to determine whether they have a disability and may require special education and related services proceed to the next step, evaluation. The disabilities coordinator has primary responsibility for this third step, evaluation, only.

(b) *Screening, the first step in the assessment process*, consists of standardized health screening and developmental screening which includes speech, hearing and vision. It is a brief process, which can be repeated, and is never used to determine that a child has a disability. It only indicates that a child may need further evaluation to determine whether the child has a disability. Rescreening must be provided as needed.

(1) Grantees must provide for developmental, hearing and vision screenings of all Early Head Start and Head Start children within 45 days of the child's entry into the program. This does not preclude starting screening in the spring, before program services begin in the fall.

(2) Grantees must make concerted efforts to reach and include the most in need and hardest to reach in the screening effort, providing assistance but urging parents to complete screening before the start of the program year.

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(3) Developmental screening is a brief check to identify children who need further evaluation to determine whether they may have disabilities. It provides information in three major developmental areas: visual/motor, language and cognition, and gross motor/body awareness for use along with observation data, parent reports and home visit information. When appropriate standardized developmental screening instruments exist, they must be used. The disabilities coordinator must coordinate with the health coordinator and staff who have the responsibility for implementing health screening and with the education staff who have the responsibility for implementing developmental screening.

(c) Staff must inform parents of the types and purposes of the screening well in advance of the screening, the results of these screenings and the purposes and results of any subsequent evaluations.

(d) *Developmental assessment, the second step*, is the collection of information on each child's functioning in these areas: gross and fine motor skills, perceptual discrimination, cognition, attention skills, self-help, social and receptive skills and expressive language. The disabilities coordinator must coordinate with the education coordinator in the on-going assessment of each Head Start child's functioning in all developmental areas by including this developmental information in later diagnostic and program planning activities for children with disabilities.

(e) *The disabilities coordinator must arrange for further, formal, evaluation of a child who has been identified as possibly having a disability, the third step.* (1) The disabilities coordinator must refer a child to the LEA for evaluation as soon as the need is evident, starting as early as the child's third birthday.

(2) If the LEA does not evaluate the child, Head Start is responsible for arranging or providing for an evaluation, using its own resources and accessing others. In this case, the evaluation must meet the following requirements:

(i) Testing and evaluation procedures must be selected and administered so as not to be racially or culturally discriminatory, administered in the child's native language or mode of

communication, unless it clearly is not feasible to do so.

(ii) Testing and evaluation procedures must be administered by trained (State certified or licensed) personnel.

(iii) No single procedure may be the sole criterion for determining an appropriate educational program for a child.

(iv) The evaluation must be made by a multidisciplinary team or group of persons including at least one teacher or specialist with knowledge in the area of suspected disability.

(v) Evaluators must use only assessment materials which have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used.

(vi) Tests used with children with impaired sensory, manual or communication skills must be administered so that they reflect the children's aptitudes and achievement levels and not just the disabilities.

(vii) Tests and materials must assess all areas related to the suspected disability.

(viii) In the case of a child whose primary disability appears to be a speech or language impairment, the team must assure that enough tests are used to determine that the impairment is not a symptom of another disability and a speech or language pathologist should be involved in the evaluation.

(3) Parental consent in writing must be obtained before a child can have an initial evaluation to determine whether the child has a disability.

(4) Confidentiality must be maintained in accordance with grantee and State requirements. Parents must be given the opportunity to review their child's records in a timely manner and they must be notified and give permission if additional evaluations are proposed. Grantees must explain the purpose and results of the evaluation and make concerted efforts to help the parents understand them.

(5) The multidisciplinary team provides the results of the evaluation, and its professional opinion that the child does or does not need special education and related services, to the disabilities coordinator. If it is their professional opinion that a child has a disability,

the team is to state which of the eligibility criteria applies and provide recommendations for programming, along with their findings. Only children whom the evaluation team determines need special education and related services may be counted as children with disabilities.

[58 FR 5501, Jan. 21, 1993, as amended at 61 FR 57227, Nov. 5, 1996]

§ 1308.7 Eligibility criteria: Health impairment.

(a) A child is classified as health impaired who has limited strength, vitality or alertness due to a chronic or acute health problem which adversely affects learning.

(b) The health impairment classification may include, but is not limited to, cancer, some neurological disorders, rheumatic fever, severe asthma, uncontrolled seizure disorders, heart conditions, lead poisoning, diabetes, AIDS, blood disorders, including hemophilia, sickle cell anemia, cystic fibrosis, heart disease and attention deficit disorder.

(c) This category includes medically fragile children such as ventilator dependent children who are in need of special education and related services.

(d) A child may be classified as having an attention deficit disorder under this category who has chronic and pervasive developmentally inappropriate inattention, hyperactivity, or impulsivity. To be considered a disorder, this behavior must affect the child's functioning severely. To avoid overuse of this category, grantees are cautioned to assure that only the enrolled children who most severely manifest this behavior must be classified in this category.

(1) The condition must severely affect the performance of a child who is trying to carry out a developmentally appropriate activity that requires orienting, focusing, or maintaining attention during classroom instructions and activities, planning and completing activities, following simple directions, organizing materials for play or other activities, or participating in group activities. It also may be manifested in overactivity or impulsive acts which appear to be or are interpreted as physical aggression. The disorder must

manifest itself in at least two different settings, one of which must be the Head Start program site.

(2) Children must not be classified as having attention deficit disorders based on:

(i) Temporary problems in attention due to events such as a divorce, death of a family member or post-traumatic stress reactions to events such as sexual abuse or violence in the neighborhood;

(ii) Problems in attention which occur suddenly and acutely with psychiatric disorders such as depression, anxiety and schizophrenia;

(iii) Behaviors which may be caused by frustration stemming from inappropriate programming beyond the child's ability level or by developmentally inappropriate demands for long periods of inactive, passive activity;

(iv) Intentional noncompliance or opposition to reasonable requests that are typical of good preschool programs; or

(v) Inattention due to cultural or language differences.

(3) An attention deficit disorder must have had its onset in early childhood and have persisted through the course of child development when children normally mature and become able to operate in a socialized preschool environment. Because many children younger than four have difficulty orienting, maintaining and focussing attention and are highly active, when Head Start is responsible for the evaluation, attention deficit disorder applies to four and five year old children in Head Start but not to three year olds.

(4) Assessment procedures must include teacher reports which document the frequency and nature of indications of possible attention deficit disorders and describe the specific situations and events occurring just before the problems manifested themselves. Reports must indicate how the child's functioning was impaired and must be confirmed by independent information from a second observer.