

HEAD START

Created in 1965, [page](#) Head Start is the most successful, [drugs](#) longest-running, national school readiness program in the United States. It provides comprehensive education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families. More than 22 million pre-school aged children have participated in Head Start.

The overall goal of Head Start is to help end poverty by providing preschool children from low-income families and children with disabilities with a program that meets emotional, social, health, nutritional and psychological needs, increases social competence, and improves the chances of success in school.

Though federally-funded, each program is required to provide a 20 percent local funding match. This nationwide program works through several major areas, including education, health and nutrition, parent involvement and social services.

ELIGIBILITY: Eligibility for Head Start is largely income based (100% of the federal poverty level). To qualify for Head Start, children must reach three (3) years of age before October 16, 2010, or five (5) years of age after October 16, 2010.

To apply the following must be provided:

1. Proof of income for both parents such as a W-2 tax statement, a copy of their most recent IRS income tax return, Social Security, Veteran's Benefits, Unemployment Benefits, and their Work First Family Assistance Award letter
2. The child's birth certificate (Certified Copy)
3. The child's shot and card or immunization records;
4. Current Medicaid Card (if you receive Medicaid); and,

5. A copy of your child's last physical exam, signed by the doctor

DISABILITIES: All programs provide full services to children with disabilities. Head start serves children with disabilities whose family income may be above the poverty guidelines.

EDUCATION: The goal of Head Start is to ensure that those children enrolled in the program are ready to begin school. Educational standards are fully outlined in national performance standards which have become the de facto standards for high-quality pre-school education programs

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: Both groups involved in operation, governance and evaluation of the program.

HEALTH: Health is seen as an important factor in a child's ability to thrive and develop. Program provides screenings to evaluate a child's overall health, then help to ensure regular health check-ups, including dental care. All Head Start programs teach good practices in oral hygiene, nutrition, personal care and safety

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS: "Focus on delivering high-quality child development services to children from low-income families."