Early Head Start and CCDF: Opportunities, Similarities and Differences in Two Federal Early Learning and Development Opportunities
CCDF: The Flexible Partner

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Overview

- CCDF Overview
- Federal rules and regulations
- Key areas of state flexibility
- Options for states to align with EHS
CCDF Overview

• Primary source of funding for child care assistance for low-income working families and to improve child care quality.

• Federal government sets broad parameters for the program and a floor for basic health and safety.

• States make policy decisions within those broad parameters that impact access, quality, and supply of child care.
Current Status

• CCDBG last reauthorized in 1996.

• Regulatory Action
  ▪ Office of Child Care issued new proposed regulations June 2013.
  ▪ Anticipate final rule Summer 2014.

• Congressional Action
  ▪ Senate passed CCDBG reauthorization March 2014.
  ▪ House held CCDBG hearing March 2014; no companion bill at this time.
CCDF Goals

• CCDF goals emphasize maximum flexibility for states, parental choice, consumer education, independence from public assistance and state regulation of health, safety and licensing standards (current law).

• Broad interest in revising goals to have greater focus on quality, school readiness and improved coordination of early care and education.

• But CCDF must meet needs of children with working parents, birth to 13.
CCDF: Federal Requirements

- States are required to submit biennial CCDF state plans.
- States must provide consumer education information to families.
- States must have basic health and safety requirements.
- States must allow for parent choice of any legally operating provider.
- States establish licensing and monitoring policies and decide who is exempt from licensing.
- States must conduct market rate surveys at least every two years.
- States set provider payment rates that allow for equal access for eligible children.
- States must have a sliding fee scale for parent co-payments.
- States must spend 4% of funds on quality initiatives (in addition to targeted funds for quality improvement and infant-toddler quality improvement).
CCDF: Who’s Eligible?

• Federal eligibility criteria
  ▪ Children must be ages birth-13, or up to 19 for children with specific special needs.
  ▪ Children must have parents who are working, or in education or training programs or be in protective services.
  ▪ Family income must be below 85% of SMI, and states must prioritize very low income children and children with special needs.
  ▪ Children must be qualified immigrants or citizens.
Who Gets Help?

• Income eligibility is set above federal poverty in all states; between 100-150 percent of poverty for family of three in 37 states.
• However, states serve low-income and TANF families first.
  ▪ More than half of families have incomes below poverty; 76 percent below 150 percent of poverty.
  ▪ 19 percent of families report TANF as a source of income.

CCDF Recipients by Income (FY 2012)

- Below 100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL) 51%
- Between 100 - 150 Percent FPL 25%
- Above 150 Percent of FPL 13%
- Invalid/Unreported Data or Head of Household is Child 11%
- 51%
Infants and Toddlers in CCDF

• 28 percent of children in CCDF< Age 3
  ▪ Ranges from 18 percent in California to 49 percent in DC

• 87 percent of infants and toddlers in CCDF are in licensed care.
  ▪ 69 % in centers and 28% in family child care and group homes.

• 64 percent of infants and toddlers have family incomes under federal poverty (EHS eligible).

• Average monthly CCDF payment for infant-toddler care is $462 ($5,544 annually)
Key Areas of State Flexibility

• States define work, education and training
• States set income eligibility and prioritize low income families and other groups.
• States decide how eligibility is determined
• States set how care is authorized.
• States set provider payment rates.
• States determine policies and processes.
CCDF: Some Key Differences from EHS and Opportunities

- CCDF supports parental employment
  - States can establish broad definitions of work, including job search, that allow for more continuous eligibility.
  - There is no requirement to match work hours or schedules to child care.

- CCDF receipt averages 3-7 months.
  - States can set longer eligibility periods (aligned with EHS) with limited interim reporting.
CCDF: Key Differences & Opportunities

• Most CCDF-funded care is paid through vouchers.
  ▪ States can use direct contracts tied to quality standards to support children and providers.

• CCDF has a parent co-payment
  ▪ States are required to have sliding fee scale but may waive co-payments for families under poverty.

• CCDF has immigration restrictions
  ▪ Verification requirements do not apply to child care subject to Head Start standards and supported by combined Head Start and CCDF funds.
CCDF: Key Differences & Opportunities

• Provider payment rates are very low.
  ▪ States can pay rates that support high-quality care.
  ▪ State can use payment methods that support provider stability: enrollment vs attendance, absence days, timely payments.

• Some states restrict CCDF dollars.
  ▪ States can allow providers to layer funding without restricting child care funds when Head Start funds are also used.
State Decisions are Constrained by Resources

• Fiscal challenges can prevent reforms:
  ▪ Total CCDF and TANF spending on child care in FY 2012 at 10 year low.
  ▪ Serve 260,000 fewer children in CCDF since 2006.
  ▪ Serve only one in six children eligible under federal rules.

• On the other hand, resource constraints and reduced administrative capacity in states can make simplification of CCDF appealing.
Early Head Start 101: A Standard of Quality

Yvette Sanchez Fuentes
National Alliance for Hispanic Families
Today we will look at . . .

1. Purpose of EHS and Guiding Principles

2. Federal Regulations

3. Key Requirements

The main pillar that separates Early Head Start and Head Start from many other early learning programs is the delivery of comprehensive services, including health, developmental and behavioral screening and follow-up.
Purpose of Head Start & Early Head Start

To promote the school readiness of low income children by enhancing their cognitive, social and emotional development:

• in a learning environment that supports children’s growth in language, literacy, mathematics, science, social and emotional functioning, creative arts, physical skills, and approaches to learning and

• through the provision of health, educational, nutritional, social and other services that are determined, based on family needs assessments, to be necessary.
The Purpose of Early Head Start (EHS)

Provide family-centered services for low-income families with very young children designed to promote the development of the children and to enable their parents to fulfill their roles as parents and to move toward self-sufficiency.
Standard of Quality: Vision and Principles

- An Emphasis on High Quality
- Prevention and Promotion Activities
- Positive Relationships and Continuity
- Parent Involvement
- Inclusion
- Cultural competence
- Comprehensiveness, Flexibility and Responsiveness
- Transition planning
- Collaboration
Head Start Performance Standards


- The Performance Standards are the mandatory regulations that grantees and delegate agencies must implement in order to operate a Head Start and/or Early Head Start program.

EHS Research Note: Implementing the Performance Standards
The EHS Research and Evaluation Project demonstrated that implementing the Head Start Program Performance Standards fully and early ensures quality program services and maximizes critical impacts on children and families.
Head Start Performance Standards
Provide Head Start Grantee Requirements for . . .

- Eligibility, recruitment, selection, attendance
- Early childhood education and development
- Health and safety
- Health promotion
- Nutrition
- Disabilities
- Parent involvement
- Family partnerships
- Community partnerships
- Administrative and financial management
- Transportation and facilities
Eligible Applicants

- Current Head Start or Early Head Start grantees
- Independent school districts
- Public and State controlled institutions of higher education
- Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)
- Public housing authorities/Indian housing authorities
- Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- Private institutions of higher education
- For-profit organizations
- Small businesses
- State governments
- County governments
- City or township governments
Family Eligibility, Enrollment, Recruitment, and Attendance

- Pregnant women and children birth through two whose income falls below the Federal poverty level
- Children who are eligible for public assistance, are homeless, have a disability, or are in the child welfare system
- Up to 10% of slots can be filled with high need children above the poverty line
- In addition, at least 10% of slots must be filled with children with disabilities.
- Once deemed eligible for Early Head Start, a child remains eligible for the duration of the program
- Early Head Start programs must actively recruit local eligible families to the program and keep a waiting list
- Attendance must be monitored and family contact must be made in instances of high absenteeism
Program Options

- **Home-Based services**, which bring EHS staff into family homes every week to support child development and to nurture the parent-child relationship. Twice per month, the program offers opportunities for parents and children to come together as a group for learning, discussion, and social activity.

- **Center-Based services**, which provide care and enrichment experiences to children in an early care and education setting. Staff members also visit family homes at least twice per year.

- **Combination services**, which combine both home- and center-based services.

- **Family Child Care services**, which provide care and education to children in a private home or family-like setting.
Program Options for EHS - Child Care Partnerships

- **Center Based Option:** “Full year”
- **Family Child Care Option:** All EHS with FCC as primary delivery (with some structural differences - i.e. ratios, space, class size)
- **Combination of Center and Family Child Care**
- **Children birth through three** whose income falls below the Federal poverty level

EHS Research Note: Which Program Option Had the Biggest Impact on Families?

The EHS research and evaluation program found that programs which offered **multiple flexible options** that were able to meet the changing needs of families were most successful. These programs consistently enhanced children’s language development and aspects of social-emotional development. Programs which offered combination services *and* that fully implemented the Head Start Program Performance Standards early had a particularly strong pattern of impacts.
KEY REQUIREMENTS FOR EARLY HEAD START: SERVICES AND SYSTEMS
Ratios and Group Size

- **Center based**: One teacher for every 4 infants and toddlers - Maximum group size of 8

- **Family Child Care**: One Provider: Maximum group size of 6 with no more than 2 under age 2

- **Provider and assistant**: Maximum group size of 12 with no more than 4 infants and toddlers (with only 2 under 18 months)
EHS Teacher and Staff Credentials

Head Start Act Section 645A(h):

- (1) Ensure that, not later than September 30, 2010, all teachers providing direct services to children and families participating in Early Head Start programs located in Early Head Start centers, have a minimum of a child development associate credential, and have been trained (or have equivalent coursework) in early childhood development; and

- (2) establish staff qualification goals to ensure that not later than September 30, 2012, all such teachers have been trained (or have equivalent coursework) in early childhood development with a focus on infant and toddler development.

- Center-based teachers must have a minimum of an Infant-Toddler CDA or a Preschool CDA with equivalent coursework in infant-toddler development

- Family child care teachers must have previous early child care experience and, at a minimum, enroll in an early childhood credential or degree program within six months of beginning service

- Child development consultants or specialists must have a B.A. or advanced degree in early childhood education or a B.A. in a related field with equivalent coursework and experience in early childhood development
Early Childhood Education and Development

Continuity
- Primary caregiver
- Continued eligibility
- Full year services

Child Development
- Evidence based curriculum and teaching practices
- Ongoing child assessment
- Individualized services
- Continuous program improvement

EHS Research Note: EHS Services and Child Development
Stimulating environments, skilled staff, a structured (yet flexible) curriculum, and enriching experiences are the ingredients that children and families need to grow. In fact, the research and evaluation project found that Early Head Start programs produced statistically significant, positive impacts on standardized measures of children's cognitive and language development. Positive impacts were also established in the social-emotional domain as well, including lower levels of aggressive behavior.
Nutrition

• All Early Head Start programs must participate in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program and other programs as appropriate

• Programs must meet the nutritional needs and feeding requirements of each child

• Infants and young toddlers must be fed “on demand” to the extent possible or at appropriate intervals

• Each child must receive meals and snacks that provide between 1/3 and 2/3 of the child's daily nutritional needs, depending on the length of the program’s day

• Programs must ensure that nutritional services contribute to the development and socialization of enrolled children
Health

• Programs must ensure that all children have health care and healthcare needs met within the first 90 days of enrollment

• All children must receive sensory, developmental and behavioral screenings within 45 days of enrollment

• Programs must work with families to track ongoing health and development

• Programs must link families to services and supports when needs are identified

• Programs must implement safe sleep practices to prevent SIDS and provide adequate spacing and appropriate equipment to accommodate infant sleeping
Family and Community Partnerships

- Increased parent knowledge of child development
- Parent Engagement as experts and advocates for their children
- Policy Councils and Committees
- Opportunities for Family Partnership/Goal Setting Opportunities
- Family access to needed community resources
- Two home visits in Center Based programs
Administrative and Financial Management

- Programs must provide a 20% non-Federal match of funds for each Early Head Start grant. Waivers for this match may be granted depending on each grantee’s situation.

- Programs may spend no more than 15% of their total funds on administrative functions.
Facilities

- Programs must provide a physical environment and facilities conducive to learning and reflective of the different stages of development of each child
- Programs must provide adequate space for indoor and outdoor activities and for sleeping
  - Centers must have at least 35 square feet of usable indoor
  - Centers must also have at least 75 square feet of usable outdoor play space per child
  - EHS programs must space cribs and cots at least three feet apart
- Facilities owned or operated by Early Head Start and Head Start grantee or delegate agencies must meet the licensing requirements of 45 CFR 1306.30
Transportation

- Programs must assist families who need transportation in order for their children to attend the program to obtain it.

- Programs providing transportation services, must ensure that each vehicle used in providing such services is equipped with a communication system, safety equipment, a first aid kit, and a seatbelt cutter.

- All accidents involving vehicles that transport children must be reported in accordance with applicable State requirements.

- Programs must ensure that children are only released to a parent or legal guardian, or other individual identified in writing by the parent or legal guardian.
Quick Note on MSHS and AI/AN Programs

- Set aside in the partnerships 3% and 2% respectively
- Must meet the same standards and models
- Unique populations who have been providing flexibility to the children and families for 45 years
As you move forward keep in mind . . .

“I've always maintained that it isn't the form that's going to make the difference. It isn't the rule or the procedure or the ideology, but it's human beings that will make it.”

Cesar Chavez