



Department for Children and Families
Child Development Division
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Dear Community Partners,

Head Start and Early Head Start are federally funded national child and family development programs which provide comprehensive services for low-income families and their children. Head Start serves children ages three to five. Early Head Start serves pregnant women and children from birth to age three. In Vermont there is a State Head Start Collaboration Office within the Department for Children and Families, Child Development Division that works with Vermont's seven Head Start programs to help make sure state and federal services are available to families and organized in the most helpful way.

Recently the Vermont Head Start Collaboration Office conducted a needs assessment of Head Start and Early Head Start to learn how to better support them in coordinating, collaborating, and aligning services for children and families. Nine federal priorities were assessed:

- health care
- homelessness
- welfare/child welfare
- family literacy
- child care
- community services
- disabilities
- education
- professional development

Results showed that Head Start has the most difficulty with the following aspects of key priority areas:

- Coordinating transportation with LEAs
- Sharing data/information with health-related services on children enrolled in Head Start
- Obtaining timely evaluations of children suspected of having delays or disabilities

- Engaging with community partners providing services to children experiencing homelessness for cross-training and planning purposes
- MOUs with pre-k partners that prioritize enrollment for children experiencing homelessness
- Helping families get transportation to medical appointments

Using the results of the needs assessment, the Collaboration Office will develop a comprehensive, strategic plan to address the greatest needs and challenges and to build on strengths and successes. Please contact KC Whiteley at 802-241-2705 or kc.whiteley@ahs.state.vt.us if you would like to contribute to this project or would like more information about the programs or the results of this needs assessment.

The full needs assessment report can be viewed at the DCF Child Development Division's website at: <http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/reports>