



Hidalgo County Head Start Program



A message from the Executive Director: Teresa Flores

An organization is only as strong as the people that support it. We at the Hidalgo County Head Start Program are very proud of our community, parents, elected officials and staff for their contribution, selfless dedication and support to our Program's Mission.

One of the real joys of the holiday season is taking the opportunity to say thanks to all of you. Whether you are a parent, a staff member, a volunteer, a Policy Council, a Grantee Board member or community partner, together we are changing lives and influencing the future. Children who participate in Head Start receive the support and love of an entire community that lasts a lifetime, and have a profound effect on future generations. The Hidalgo County Head Start Program is a special place for children and families. Thousands of families have benefited from our program since the beginning in 1965.



In this newsletter you will learn about school readiness as we help in preparing children for their educational journey. On page 4 you can read about the benefits of reading with your children. If you are looking for employment look on page 6 for positions with Head Start. Want to learn about Active Supervision? Look on page 7. Family Services and Transition follows with parent training and community networking, lots of things are happening! Why Immunizations? Read all about it on page 10. Want to learn how to FLIP IT! Look on page 12. Special Services for our extra special children look on page 13.

Please enjoy reading our newsletter and if you have any suggestions for future topics, please let us know, until then a very heartfelt thank you and wishes for a peaceful and prosperous new year.



Visit us at hchsp.org



Our mission is to coalesce, inspire, and support the Head Start field as a leader in early childhood development and education.



The Head Start Advantage

Success in School Readiness

Key Takeaways

1. Head Start children have enhanced physical health, improved social skills, and increased math, language, and literacy skills that better prepare them for kindergarten and school.
2. Head Start parents are more engaged in supporting their children's learning and success at home and in school.

Measurable Impact

Better engagement

Head Start children are able to pay better attention in school and engage in learning, as well as have more positive relationships with their parents, teachers, and peers.

Life-long skills

Head Start children perform better in cognitive and language development and have better executive function skills.

Literacy

Head Start children have better pre-reading, pre-writing and vocabulary skills.



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The Head Start Advantage: Success in School Readiness

What is school readiness and why is it important?

School readiness describes the level at which children possess the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and life.

The *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF)* outlines and describes the skills, behaviors, and concepts that are essential for school and long-term success. The framework consists of five domains: approaches to learning; social and emotional development; language and literacy; cognition; and perception, motor, and physical development.

Development in these five areas lays the foundation for a child's future educational, social, and economic success. Sadly, academic achievement gaps between higher- and lower-income students have increased in the past three decades, and these disparities are present when children enter kindergarten and persist as children progress throughout school.

Research has shown that early learning habits and outcomes largely predict later academic performance. For instance, self-regulation skills promote or limit a child's capacity to follow classroom rules, sit still, and learn.

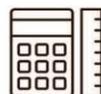
How does Head Start promote children's school readiness?

The Head Start model recognizes that a child's family, school, and community interact and influence his or her development.

Head Start embeds school readiness in its Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework and adopts a multigenerational approach to its services, focusing on creating opportunities for and addressing the needs of both children and their parents.

Head Start's goals for school readiness are threefold: children are ready for school; families are ready to support their children's learning; and schools are ready for children.

For citations, please visit go.nhsa.org/HSA



Head Start children make progress towards norms in math and have significantly enhanced cognitive abilities.



Dual language learners in Head Start have higher scores on receptive vocabulary, letter-word identification, and spelling.



Head Start children are more likely to have hearing and vision screening, health insurance, to have received dental checkups, and to be immunized.



Head Start children are less hyperactive, withdrawn, and aggressive, and participation in Head Start increases their self-control and self-esteem.



Longitudinal studies demonstrate Head Start's long-term impact on children's educational attainment and life chances, including increased high school graduation rates, increased likelihood of pursuing and completing higher education, and decreased criminal behavior among African-Americans.

What is Head Start?

Head Start (HS) is a comprehensive early education program for children from at-risk backgrounds from birth to age 5. From early math and reading skills to confidence and resilience, Head Start helps children build the abilities they need to be successful in school and life. Head Start recognizes the role of parents as their child's first and lifelong educators and engages parents as equal partners.



Before elementary school. Before kindergarten. Before preschool. Your child is learning. Not just learning – learning at lightning speed, from the day he or she is born.



- From birth to age 5, your baby's brain will make trillions of connections between billions of neurons. Brain size doubles during the first year, and by age 3, a child's brain has nearly reached its adult weight.
- Your baby's ability to learn language will be unprecedented. Her vocabulary will grow at an exponential rate.
- Your child will learn new concepts. She will gain pre-literacy skills. She will build the foundations for her future knowledge.



But just how much she will learn will be up to you. If you waste this window of opportunity, she may never catch up. If you wait, it's too late.

Nobody is in a position to teach, nurture, talk, sing, or read aloud like YOU can.

No matter your job or your education level. Whether you are the mother or the father. The grandmother or the nanny. The caring neighbor or the family friend. You are the person who can make a difference that will last your child's lifetime.

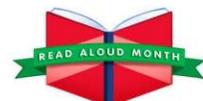


You can – you must – be your child's first and most important teacher.

Start today. Start now. Read Aloud **15 MINUTES**, today and every day, and grow your child's brain.



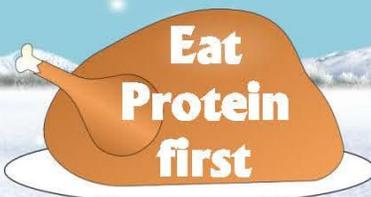
Every child. Every parent. Every day.



Learn more at ReadAloud.org

Child Nutrition Department

Stay Healthy During the Holidays!



Holiday Traditions



Reward yourself with only the most special holiday Treats



“Human Resources—Partnering for Success”



CURRENT VACANCIES:

POSITION REQUIREMENTS

Teacher—provides classroom instruction for children.

Bachelor's Degree in EC-6 Generalist is preferred; or an Associate's of Arts in Early Childhood Education. Other Degrees considered for this position: Assoc. of Arts in Teaching in Early Childhood – 4th Grade; Assoc. of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies + Texas Early Childhood Articulation Courses TECA; Assoc. in Early Childhood Education – 6th Grade + TECA.

Texas Early Childhood Articulation Courses (TECA)

Assistant Teacher-Assists the Teacher with all classroom activities.

Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential required or enrolled in a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential Program to be completed within 2 years; enrolled in a program leading to an associates or baccalaureate degree and/or a minimum for twelve (12) college credit hours.

Disability Classroom Assistant-Assist the Teacher with integrating all children in learning activities.

Must have a high school diploma or equivalent and 12 college credit hours. Child Development Associate Credential preferred.

Bus Driver/Maintenance

Must have a high school diploma or its equivalent. Must have Texas CDL drivers license with endorsement (P) Passenger and of (A) Air Brakes. Must keep a current Region I Bus Driver Certification.

Vocational and Technical credentials and Online Degrees are not accepted.



HIDALGO COUNTY

HEAD START EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

As an employee of the Hidalgo County Head Start Program you will be provided with the following benefits.

- Employee Health Insurance (Employer Pays)
- Life Insurance Policy (30K) (Employer Pays)
- Supplemental Insurance - Vision and Dental
- Additional Supplement Insurances available at Open Enrollment: Vision, Dental, Accident, Cancer, Disability Insurance, Critical Illness, and Life Insurance.
- Pension (401K) Plan
- Access to Wellness Care

In addition to these benefits, all employees are provided with professional training/staff development.

- Pre-Service Training for compliance with Minimum Standards—Child Care Licensing Requirements (24 hours) at start of employment.
- Annual Training for compliance requirements for Minimum Standards—Child Care Licensing Minimum Requirements. (24 hours).
- Specialized training in areas to assignment as needed.



HIRING AT-A-GLANCE...

All applications are submitted on-line and all necessary credentials must be provided with the application as requested. Necessary credentials may include:

- Copies of diplomas—High School/GED or College Diploma
- College Transcript,
- Resume with employer references, Special Certifications,
- Texas Driver License or Texas DPS Identification Card,
- Auto Liability Insurance,

How do I apply for a job online....

Go ONLINE at www.hchsp.org

Go to the following TABS:

- Employment/Opportunities
- Job Postings
- Search by Location—"Countywide"

Minimum Requirements:

- High School Diploma/GED
- Drivers License
- Auto Liability Insurance
- Tuberculosis Skin Test
- Bilingual (English/Spanish)
- Drug and Alcohol Screening Clearance
- Criminal History—FBI Background Check Clearance
- Central Registry Background Check-Child Abuse and Neglect
- Sex Offender Registry Check Clearance

ACTIVE SUPERVISION AT-A-GLANCE

SIX STRATEGIES TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE

The following strategies allow children to explore their environments safely. Infants, toddlers, and preschoolers must be directly supervised at all times. Programs that use active supervision take advantage of all available learning opportunities and never leave children unattended.

Set Up the Environment

Staff set up the environment so that they can supervise children and be accessible at all times. When activities are grouped together and furniture is at waist height or shorter, adults are always able to see and hear children. Small spaces are kept clutter free and big spaces are set up so that children have clear play spaces that staff can observe.

Position Staff

Staff carefully plan where they will position themselves in the environment to prevent children from harm. They place themselves so that they can see and hear all of the children in their care. They make sure there are always clear paths to where children are playing, sleeping, and eating so they can react quickly when necessary. Staff stay close to children who may need additional support. Their location helps them provide support, if necessary.

Scan and Count

Staff are always able to account for the children in their care. They continually scan the entire environment to know where everyone is and what they are doing. They count the children frequently. This is especially important during transitions, when children are moving from one location to another.

Listen

Specific sounds or the absence of them may signify reason for concern. Staff who are listening closely to children immediately identify signs of potential danger. Programs that think systemically implement additional strategies to safeguard children. For example, bells added to doors help alert staff when a child leaves or enters the room.

Anticipate Children's Behavior

Staff use what they know about each child's individual interests and skills to predict what he/she will do. They create challenges that children are ready for and support them in succeeding. But they also recognize when children might wander, get upset, or take a dangerous risk. Information from the daily health check (e.g., illness, allergies, lack of sleep or food, etc.) informs staff's observations and helps them anticipate children's behavior. Staff who know what to expect are better able to protect children from harm.

Engage and Redirect

Staff use what they know about each child's individual needs and development to offer support. Staff wait until children are unable to solve problems on their own to get involved. They may offer different levels of assistance or redirection depending on each individual child's needs.

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/safety-injury-prevention/safe-healthy-environments/active-supervision.html>



The Family Services Department is going full force into the 2019-2020 school year! We begin the year with our 3,690 children gearing up for this upcoming exciting year. The parents also looking forward to the opportunities the Head Start program will provide this year. Our goal is to continue to provide each and every family the opportunity to be the best part of Head Start.

We had great success with the following activities:

Parent Orientation Meetings – August 12 thru 22, 2019: The Head Start centers reported great attendance at their specific center. Parents visited their child’s classroom and met their child’s teacher and received information about classroom schedules and activities that the children will be involved in this year.

Volunteer Training – This training took place September 17 thru September 19, 2019. There were over three- hundred participants, majority of parents and some community volunteers and we welcomed back our Foster Grandparents as well. The Foster Grandparents are very excited to be in the classrooms with our little ones! Volunteers were provided a full day of training and opportunity to provide feed-back.

Parent Committee Meetings for September took place on schedule. Parents with current enrolled children are all part of their center committees. During this meeting parents elected their committee officers, to include the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian.

Parent Leadership Conference: This function took place at the Embassy Suites Convention center in McAllen. Parents were provided training to prepare them for their role as leaders at their centers. Policy Council Parent Representatives and Alternates were elected for the 2019 – 2020 school year.

The Governance Institute Conference took place on October 19, 2019 at the Double Tree Hotel. Policy Council members, 1st and 2nd Alternates were present for this training. We look forward to working with our newly elected Policy Council members.

We just had our Parent Fair for the current school year and it was an awesome event. The activity took place November 14, 2019 at the Veterans Memorial Pavilion in Mission, Texas. There were approximately (43) forty – three community partners present at the event. These agencies provided a great deal of information and some wonderful giveaway prizes to the Head Start families. The families also enjoyed a children’s program with participation from the Mission IV Head Start center.

The first Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework activity took place during the week of September 09 thru September 13 2019. This activity as reported by center managers also had excellent parent participation. There are ten modules (lessons) in the Abriendo Puertas/ Opening Doors Parent Curriculum. The Financial Literacy Program is also part of these workshops and will provide training for budget management and financial monitoring for families.



Happy Holidays! On behalf of the Transition/Community Partnership Department, we would like to thank you for your continuous support throughout this past year. Though, the first half of the program year is almost over and with the Christmas spirit all around us, we would like to reflect on our past accomplishments and highlights.

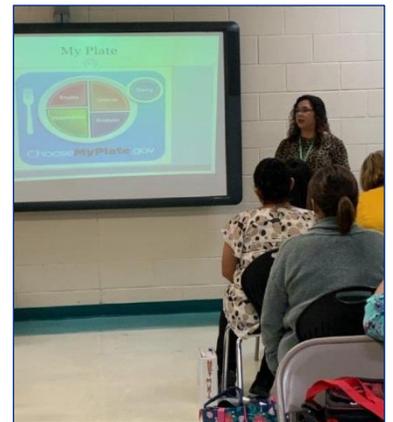
Our annual Community Network Training was held on Thursday the 29th of August at the Fellowship Church meeting room in Edinburg. The presenters or trainers of this event were over 30 community partners from different areas of service. The trainees are our support service staff, who gather this valuable information and share it with all of our parents at their centers. We have very strong commitment and collaborative support from the community, agencies, and organizations making Head Start the very best in educational and social growth for children from 3 to 5 years of age.

We participated in the annual Weslaco Parent Harvest Fair on Wednesday the 30th of October along with over 100 different agencies. Realizing there would be quite a large amount of parents participating in this event, we took the opportunity to promote Head Start and to recruit children and families.

We also participated in our annual Hidalgo County Head Start Parent Fair which was held on Thursday the 14th of November at the Mission Pavilion. This is another event in which we connect our parents with an array of services in order to assist our children and families with a better quality way of life.

On behalf of Ramiro Silva & Hermelinda Corona, we want to thank all our parents and staff for your continued support. We have high expectations for the remainder of 2019 and look forward to serving our children and families in 2020.

If we can be of any assistance please call us at 383-0706.



Why Does My Child Need Immunizations?

Immunizations (vaccines) prevent diseases that can make children very sick, cause lifelong disabilities and even death. They prevent diseases by making the body resist them.

Immunizations also protect others. When more people have been given vaccines, diseases that can be prevented by vaccines cannot spread as much. This protects babies who are too young to get vaccines, people who are too old to get vaccines and those with weaker immune systems or certain medical conditions who cannot get vaccines.

Some parents are unsure about whether to give their child immunizations. Are vaccines safe? Yes! Vaccines are tested for many years before they can be used. Vaccines continue to be studied even after they are approved for use.

Some children may have minor reactions to shots. These can include a slight fever or soreness where the shot is given. Serious reactions are rare. The important thing to know is that getting the disease is much more harmful than getting the shot.

When should my child be immunized?

Your child may get vaccines as part of well-child checkups or during visits for minor illnesses. Vaccines may be given even if your child has a cold, mild fever or is taking antibiotics. For the best protection, start the shots on time and complete each series. A child who has never been immunized or who has missed some shots can still catch up. Talk to your child's doctor or clinic.

Keep a copy of your child's shot record. When your child starts child care, school or camp, you'll need to have a record of their immunizations.



Staff Development Department

Our Annual Training was a tremendous success. The training topics were all designed to meet the needs of our children and staff. This year we had all 10 District partnership teachers present during the training days. Once again, I commend our staff for their hard work in planning, preparing, and carrying out the presentations with great dedication and professionalism.



FLIP IT![®]

Transforming
Challenging Behavior



Four supportive steps to help young children learn about their feelings, gain self-control, and reduce challenging behavior.

1
Feelings



FEELINGS: Gently talk with the child about his feelings. Tell him what you see and hear as a result of his emotions. Help him to identify the root feelings causing the behavior.

2
Limits



LIMITS: Remind the child of the positive limits and expectations you have for his behavior. Loving and simple limits help surround children with a sense of consistency, safety, and trust.

3
Inquiries



INQUIRIES: Encourage the child to think about solutions to his challenges. Ask questions that promote problem-solving and healthy coping skills. Inquiries invite children to think, learn, and gain self-control.

4
Prompts



PROMPTS: Provide creative cues, clues, and suggestions for the child who is having difficulty. Enthusiastic, bright ideas can lead the way to better problem-solving skills.

Special Services Department

Down Syndrome Awareness

What is Down Syndrome?

Down Syndrome is the most common and readily identifiable chromosomal condition associated with intellectual disabilities. It is caused by chromosomal abnormality. For some unknown reason, an accident in cell development results in 47 instead of the usual 46 chromosomes. This extra chromosome changes the orderly development of the body and the brain. In most cases the diagnoses of Down syndrome is made according to results from a chromosomal test administered shortly after birth.

Incidence

Nearly 5,000 babies are born with Down syndrome in the United States each year. This means that 1 in every 733 babies born with this condition. Although parents of any age may have a child with Down syndrome, 80% are born to women under the age of 35. Down syndrome is not a disease, nor is it contagious. It's most common forms usually do not occur more than once in a family.



Characteristics

There are over 50 clinical signs of Down Syndrome, but it is rare to find all or even most of them in one person. Every child with Down syndrome is different. Some common characteristics include:

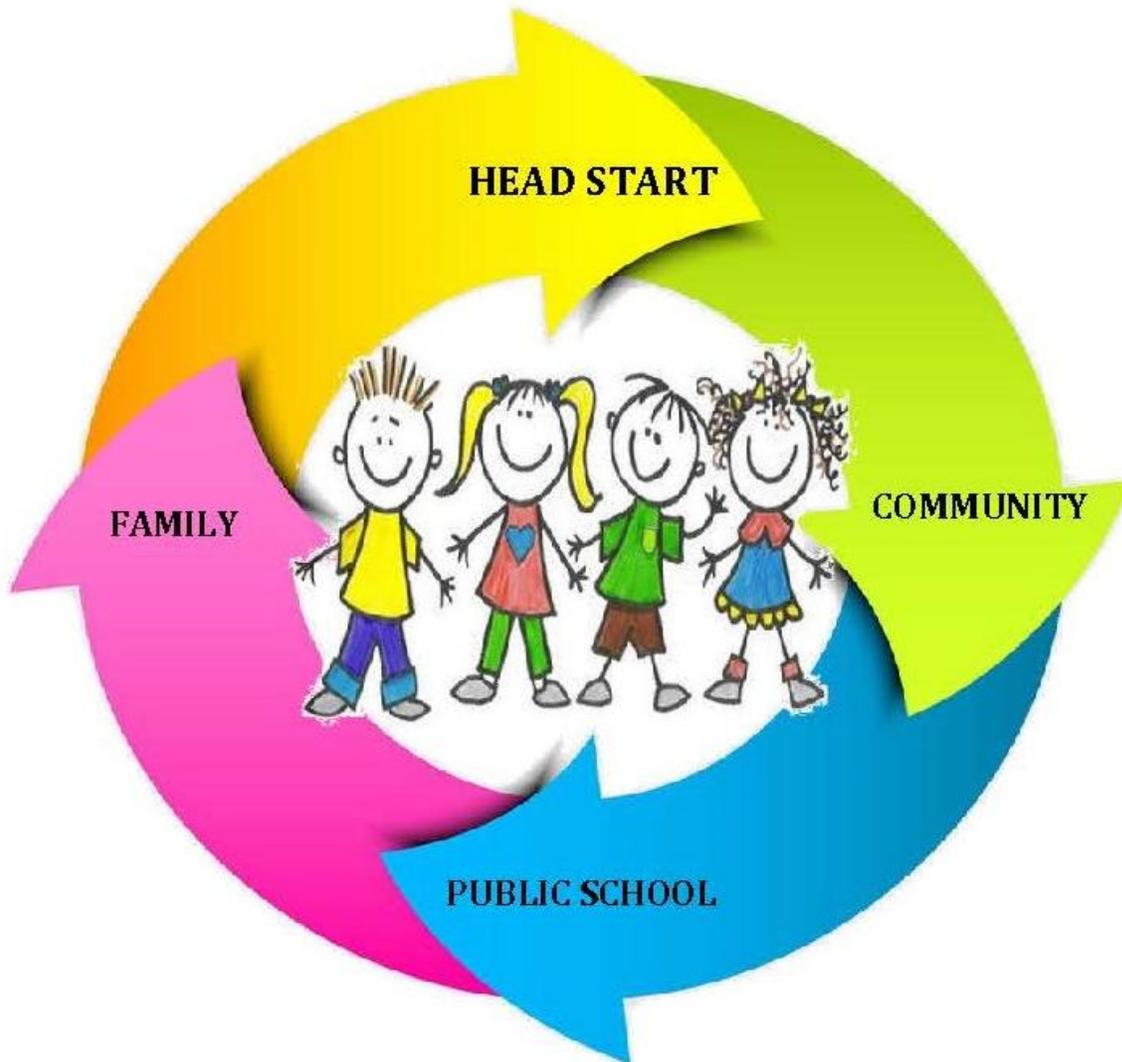
- *Poor muscle tone
- *Slanting eyes with folds of skin at the inner corners (called epicanthal folds)
- *Short, broad hands with a single crease across the palm of one or both hands
- *Hyperflexibility (excessive ability to extend the joints)
- *Broad feet with short toes
- *Short low set ears
- *Short neck and small head, etc.
- *Short oral cavity; and/or
- *Short, high-pitched cries in infancy



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT US AT 956-380-4164

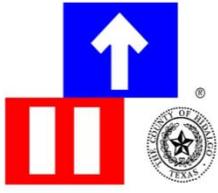


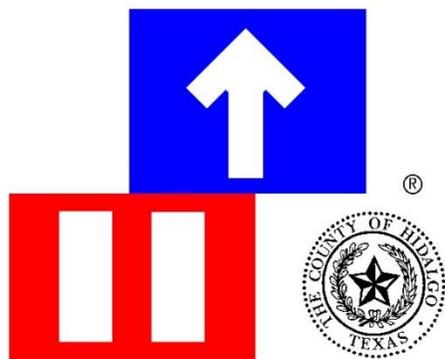
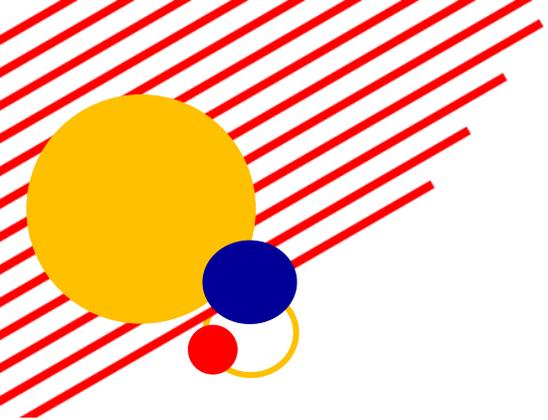
Hidalgo County Head Start Program Partnering for Success...



**Working Together:
Building a Strong Framework**

Thank you for making this program a great success!





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