



OLHSA is a private, 501(c)3 non-profit Community Action Agency, founded in 1964. In those 47 years over 1 million services have been provided to struggling people in Oakland and Livingston Counties by utilizing federal, state, local, and private funds to provide knowledge, skills, and opportunities that lead to higher quality of life and economic security.

Head Start Appropriations

Head Start in 2010

- OLHSA's Head Start Program has served over 78,000 children and their families since it was brought to Oakland County in 1965.
- For the program year 2010-2011 OLHSA is serving 1,601 Head Start children and their families in 19 communities in Oakland County and 127 Early Head Start families in Pontiac, Lake Orion, and Oxford. Over 500 children are on the waiting list for each program.
- Both Early Head Start and Head Start offer comprehensive services in education, health, disability, parental involvement and social services.
- Head Start uses the High/Scope Pre-School Curriculum and Early Head Start uses both High/Scope and Growing Great Kids curriculum. The corresponding Child Observation Record is an integral portion of tracking and assessing student outcomes.
- The Outcomes Assessment concentrates on a child's development in language, literacy, mathematics, science, creative arts, social and emotional development, approaches to learning and physical health.
- The strong emphasis on a family involvement approach to education is what separates Head Start from current standard preschool programming.
- Children between the ages of zero and five years are growing rapidly in all areas of development; physical, emotional and academic. Both Early Head Start and Head Start, with the use of assessment tools and corresponding collected data, build a program that is responsive not only to the mandated federal guidelines but also to the needs of the children and families being served.
- OLHSA has implemented a program of assessment and data collection that tracks children at the beginning of the school year, mid-year and at the end of the year. The system also tracks family outcomes.
- The data collected through the assessment will provide guidance on how to better target the needs of individual children in the program. The data will also provide evidence of the effectiveness Head Start demonstrates in preparing children for school.
- More than 1 million children and families are enrolled in Head Start nationwide and Head Start employs 215,000 teachers and staff.
- Head Start in Oakland County serves approximately half of the eligible children. American Recovery and Reinvestment (ARRA) funding has enabled OLHSA to provide Early Head Start services but both programs have extensive waiting lists. The number of children in Michigan at or below poverty level has increased to 23 percent.

Recommendations

- OLHSA urges continuation of the funding that ARRA provided to Head Start programs. **With all the gains made through this additional funding, we cannot let children and families regress.** With an additional 1.1 million young children living in poverty we must sustain and increase the funding that Head Start has received. This funding has allowed for increased services and expansion of both Head Start and Early Head Start, allowing additional children to be served and quality initiatives to be instituted. OLHSA recommends support of the President's budget recommendation for Head start and Early Head Start.
- OLHSA also recommends that, as the Office of Head Start revises the Head Start Performance Standards, consideration be given to the amount of non-federal share required currently. With the current economic conditions in the country, especially in Michigan, this match is becoming unrealistic and unattainable for programs. We urge you to consider reducing or eliminating this requirement for Head Start grantees.

For More Information:

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