

## A HEAD START DICTIONARY

**Accreditation (NAEYC).** A national, voluntary system of endorsement developed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children's National Academy of Early Childhood Programs that identifies and acknowledges high quality early childhood programs. The process involves the early childhood program in a self-study to systematically evaluate their program and identify areas in need of improvement.

**ACF (Administration for Children and Families).** The branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services responsible for Head Start and other programs focused on children and their families.

**ACYF (Administration for Children Youth and Families).** The ACF unit that directly administers Head Start.

**ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act).** The ADA, Public Law 101-336, was signed on July 26, 1990 to provide comprehensive civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities in the areas of employment, public accommodations, state and local government services, and telecommunications. This landmark civil rights legislation extends the requirements of Section 504 to all programs and provides a national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

**Ad Hoc Committee.** A temporary committee assigned a specific task.

**Administrative Costs.** The costs of developing and administering a Head Start program, which are not directly, related to the services and parent involvement areas.

**Advisory Committee.** Any group which serves an advisory rather than a policy-making role.

**Diagnostic Evaluation (or Diagnostic Assessment).** This generally refers to an evaluation done by clinicians as a result of findings identified in screening.

**Audit.** An assessment that determines whether the agency's financial operations manage itself in compliance with laws and regulations regarding expenditures of funds, accurately produce financial statements representing the agency's financial position, and establish and implement internal procedures for managing and reporting on expenditure of funds.

**Block Grants.** A type of mandatory grant where the recipients (normally States) have substantial authority over the type of activities to support, with minimal Federal administrative restrictions.

**By Laws.** The common rules agreed upon by an organization under which it operates.

**CA (Community Assessment).** A profile of the community or communities in which the Head Start program operates. This profile includes data on the characteristics of the community's population, resources, assets, and needs. Programs are required to submit a CA and the analysis of the data in relation to the program design and decisions made with their grant application in the first year of their three-year funding cycle. The CA provides essential data for ongoing program design and planning.

**CAA (Community Action Agency) or CAP (Community Action Program).** An organization either public or private non-profit which is funded by the Community Services Block Grant to administer and coordinate on a community-wide basis, a variety of anti-poverty programs which often includes Head Start.

**CCDF (Child Care Development Fund).** A federal child care act passed by Congress in 1990 authorizing ACF to fund states to provide child care services and activities to improve the availability and quality of child care. It combines four federal child care programs—AFDC/JOB child care, Transitional Child Care, At-Risk/Title IVA, and the CCDBG program.

**CCDFP (Child Care Development Fund Plan).** A plan developed by the designated child care agency in each state. The plan serves as a guide of the coordination of the state's child care services and the administration of child care subsidies and CCDF. States must promote public involvement in the plan development/review process and submit the plan to the federal Department of Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families for review and approval every two years.

**CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program).** A state administered program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that provides financial reimbursement and/or commodities for providing breakfast, lunch, and snacks which meet federal nutritional requirements to income eligible children.

**CDA (Child Development Associate).** An early childhood educator who has demonstrated skills in working with young children and their families by successfully completing a formal credentialing process. The CDA credentialing process is administered by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition. It is a nationally awarded credential recognized in 47 States.

**CDF (Children's Defense Fund).** A private nonprofit advocacy organization located in Washington, D.C. that focuses on programs and policies affecting the nation's children and families.

**Center-Based Program Option.** A Head Start program option that serves the child in a center four/five days per week. Center-based requires class size of 17 to 20 four-year-olds enrolled per class or 15-17 three-year-olds per class, class operations of 3.5 to 6 hours per day with 4 hours being optimal, a minimum of 128 days of classroom operations for programs serving children 4-days per week, and a minimum of 160 days of operation for children enrolled 5-days per week. All center-based programs must provide a minimum of 32 weeks of class operation over an eight or nine month period.

For Early Head Start center-based options, the group size is a maximum of eight infants and toddlers and staff child ratios stand at 1-4. Since Early Head Start is a full-year program, center-based services are provided 48-52 weeks per year.

**CFR (Code of Federal Regulations).** The numbering system used by the United States Government to organize and catalog all federal final rules published in the Federal Register. All federal regulations governing a specific federal program are codified for easy reference. For example, the number assigned to *Head Start Program Performance Standards* is 45 CFR, Part 1304.

**Child Care Bureau.** The Child Care Bureau administers federal funds to states, territories, and tribes to assist low income families in accessing quality child care for children while parents work or participate in education

or training This Bureau is part of the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It administers the Child Care Development Fund to states.

**Combination Program Option.** A Head Start program option that provides children and families with an experience that they would receive in both a center-based and home-based option by providing a minimum of 32-96 days per program year (2-3 days per week) of classroom center-based experiences for children and eight-24 home-based like home visits per year (1-2 visits per month).

**Community Representative.** Any member of a Policy Council or Committee who is not a parent of a currently enrolled child. A minimum of 51% of Policy Council members must be parents of currently enrolled children.

**Cost Allocation Plan.** A systematic approach used by a grantee to identify and distribute allowable costs for the various grants and contracts they administer together with the allocation methods used.

**Delegate Agency.** An agency to which responsibility is delegated by the Head Start grantee for the operation of a total, or a significant portion, of the Head Start program.

**Developmentally Appropriate Practice.** A concept of educational practices which reflect knowledge of typical development for the ages being served and an understanding of the unique personality, learning style, and family background of each child. Defined by NAEYC in their book *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs*, these practices are consistent with the *Head Start Program Performance Standards*.

**Developmental Assessment.** An ongoing process of observation and recording initiated by teachers that provides information about children's development (social, emotional, cognitive, fine and gross motor abilities, speech and language), identifying children's specific strengths and needs. The results of classroom assessment provide the basis for individualizing the curriculum for children. Programs must use ongoing assessment to individualize and monitor the progress of every enrolled child.

**Diagnostic Criteria.** The Head Start definitions of specific disabilities found in the Head Start Program Performance Standards on Services for Children with Disabilities. (45-CFR 1308)

**DOE (United States Department of Education).** The federal agency responsible for programs dealing with education.

**Early Head Start (EHS).** Established by the Head Start Act as amended May 1994, this program serves expectant families and children birth to three years old within the framework of Head Start. *The Statement of the Advisory Committee on Services for Families with Infants and Toddlers*, a report published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in September 1994, provides a blueprint for the design of the Early Head Start program.

**EDC, Inc. (Education Development Center).** An international research and development nonprofit organization located in Newton, Massachusetts, which holds the ACF, grants for the New England.

**FACES (Family and Child Experiences Survey).** FACES is part of the Head Start's Bureau's strategy for measuring the impact of Head Start across time and a variety of variables. The FACES research has provided the government with initial information on Head Start quality. FACES also has included the development of Performance Measures. Through the Measures Project the government seeks to further programs' ability to produce positive and measurable child and family outcomes and to efficiently collect and analyze Head Start data.

**Family Child Care.** A proposed Head Start program option in which services to children and families are delivered in the homes of licensed family child care providers. Proposed regulations on this new option were published in August 2000 and a final rule is pending.

**Family Partnership Agreement.** Family Partnership Agreements describe family goals, responsibilities, timetables and strategies for achieving these goals as well as progress in achieving them. This process must be initiated as early after enrollment as possible and take into consideration each family's readiness and willingness to participate in the process.

**FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education).** All children, regardless of disability, are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

**Federal Program Monitoring Report.** The reported findings from onsite Head Start program monitoring conducted by a federally led monitoring team every three years. The process for federal review is PRISM – Program Review Instrument for Systems Monitoring. If any program deficiencies are identified, programs must respond promptly with a program quality improvement plan (QIP).

**Federal Register.** A federal publication that informs the public about proposed and final regulations, program announcements, and other policies issued by OMB, DHHS, ACF, and other federal agencies. Final regulations published are included in revisions to the Code of Federal Regulations.

**Financial Status Report (FSR).** A standard, Federal government form, SF-269 (long form) or SF-269A (short form), used to monitor the financial progress of the grant and show the status of funds in non-construction programs.

**FY (Fiscal Year).** The 12-month period for which funds are allocated. The funding year is October 1 to September 30 for federal agencies. State and local program FYs vary. You need to know your program's fiscal year in order to ensure submission of required reports etc.

**GABI (Grants Application Budget Instrument).** A software package provided to Head Start grantees by DHHS through which they can submit their annual refunding application.

**GAM (Grants Administration Manual).** A document that specifies administrative policies, procedures, and general guidance to recipients of grants and cooperative agreements awarded by the agencies of the Department of Health and Human Services.

**Grantee.** A public or private profit or not-for-profit agency that receives funds directly from ACF to operate a Head Start program.

**Head Start Act.** A public law passed by Congress and signed by the President that authorizes the appropriation of funds at specific levels and addresses the intent of the program, priorities, and types of services to be provided. The Head Start Act of 1998 authorizes program operations for five years and highlights several new areas including increased expansion of Early Head Start and Head Start, research on Head Start's effectiveness, literacy and numeracy child competencies, and partnership.

**Head Start Bureau.** Division of the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which administers the Head Start program. The Bureau develops and enforces regulations based on the Head Start Act, Program Performance Standards, and other legislation.

**Head Start Fellows.** A national program that offers 10 professionals in the early childhood and family services field the opportunity to come to Washington, DC to participate in a year-long, intensive work experience. Applications are due in early December of each year.

**Health Services Advisory Committee.** A Head Start committee required by Head Start Program Performance Standards whose purpose is to advise in planning, operation, and evaluation of health services. The committee is comprised of parents and community health providers and other specialists in the various health disciplines.

**HHS (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services).** The department which includes the Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) and the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

**HSFIS (Head Start Family Information System).** A computer software package that allows a local Head Start program to collect and track information on enrolled child, family and community demographics.

**HSMTS (Head Start Monitoring and Tracking System).** The computerized system used by ACF to track Head Start issues identified through the federal monitoring. With the new monitoring system these systems are expected to change.

**Home-Based Program Option.** A Head Start program option that focuses on parents as educators and includes a minimum of 32 weekly home visits per year lasting for a minimum of 1.5 hours per visit by an assigned home visitor and a minimum of two monthly socialization experiences (16 per year) for both children and parents. In the Early Head Start program, home-based services are provided full year with the number of home visits and socializations increased accordingly.

**Hub Director.** An ACF administrator assigned to oversee ACF operations for a cluster of regions. The Region I ACF Office is part of a Hub that includes regions I, II, and III. The Hub for this cluster is Region II.

**HUD (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development).** The federal agency that funds housing programs for income-eligible families.

**IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, P.L. 102-119/P.L. 105-17).** This act amends, extends, and redefines the rights, definitions, and requirements of P.L. 94-142 and its subsequent amendments. States and jurisdictions have put in place policies to ensure that all eligible children with disabilities will receive services under IDEA. (See Part B and Part C)

**IEP (Individual Education Plan).** An individualized plan for providing services to children with disabilities.

**IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan).** An individualized plan for providing services to an entire family that has a child with a disability.

**IHP (Individual Health Plan).** An individual plan developed for child with special health care needs that outlines specific health requirements for appropriate program staff.

**IM (Information Memorandum).** A document by which the federal government provides grantees with general information other than a proposed regulation or policy. An IM has an effective life of four (4) years.

**Income Guidelines.** The poverty guidelines issued by the Department of Health and Human Services are used for determining whether a person or family is financially eligible for Head Start services. The guidelines are updated annually to reflect the current Consumer Price Index.

**Internal Dispute Resolution.** A formally adapted agency procedure that outlines a method by which the agency resolves an impasse. An impasse exists when the Policy Council/Committee and the Delegates/Grantee Board cannot reach agreement or consensus.

**Indirect Costs.** Costs of an organization that are not readily identifiable with a particular project or program, but nevertheless are necessary to the general operation of the organization and its activities.

**In-kind.** A contribution of property, supplies, or services which benefit Head Start and which are contributed by non-federal third parties without charge to the program. May be included in the non-federal match requirement.

**Interagency Agreement.** Agreements signed between agencies at the national or state level to promote additional services to Head Start. On the federal level, Interagency Agreements exist between Head Start and the Department of Labor/JTPA, the USDA/Cooperative Extension Services, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Department of Education, the Public Health Services/Division of Maternal and Child Health, and the Food and Drug Administration. A non-governmental agreement also exists between American Home Economics Association, American Optometry Association, Red Cross, Girl Scouts, and Kiwanis.

**LEA (Local Education Agency).** The public education (school) entity or its designee for the city, town, or county, etc.

**LRE (Least Restrictive Environment).** This is the basis for the inclusive classroom where children with and without disabilities play and learn together.

**Moving Ahead.** A competency-based training program designed to help local and federal Head Start staff to build or enhance skills in nearly 20 basic skill areas. The program, which can be used for individual self-study or in workshop settings, includes skill-building activities on topics including communication, conflict resolution, collaboration, financial management, and planning. It also contains an introduction to Head Start entitled *Head Start 101*.

**Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs.** An Information Memorandum published in 1991 outlining principles developed by a national multicultural task force. The principles focus programs on individualizing services to Head Start children and families and promoting acceptance and appreciation of differences.

**NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children).** A membership-supported organization committed to fostering the growth and development of children from birth through age 8 that provides its membership with services and resources to work with children.

**National Quality Research Centers.** Grants awarded in March 2001 to eight entities to conduct research on key Head Start issues. The New England Quality Research Center (NEQRC) at EDC, Inc. is one of the eight Quality Research Centers.

**New England RAP for Disability Services at EDC.** A Head Start Quality Improvement Center, funded by the Head Start Bureau, that provides Head Start programs with training, technical assistance, and resources for working with children with disabilities. In Region I, the RAP is housed at EDC, Inc.

**NFAA (Notice of Financial Assistance Award).** A legal document, awarding a federal grant. The NFAA specifies the amount of the award, the project period, specific conditions and terms of the award, and provides the documentation for the obligation of federal funds on the department's accounting system.

**NHSA (National Head Start Association).** A membership-supported organization comprised of Head Start staff, parents, directors, and friends that advocates for Head Start programs, offers a system of networking, and provides programs with information and training.

**NICHCY (National Information Center for Children & Youth with Disabilities).** This organization publishes information concerning children with disabilities. Many materials are appropriate for parents.

**Non-Federal Share.** Resources which the grantee is required to generate, cash or in-kind which benefit Head Start and which are contributed by non-federal sources without charge to the program. Twenty percent of the Head Start grant award must be a non-federal match; or \$ .25 non-federal for every \$1 of federal support.

**NPRM (Notice of Proposed Rule Making).** The process by which the federal government announces its intent to publish a federal rule/regulation. Before becoming final, all proposed rules are published in the Federal Register and comments are encouraged from interested parties. Comments are reviewed and evaluated and adjustments are made in the ruling.

**OMB (Office of Management and Budget).** The administrative entity in the executive office of the President, which oversees the policies of federal departments.

**Parent Committee.** A committee composed of *all* parents who have children enrolled in a particular Head Start center.

**Part B.** This is the section of IDEA that mandates assistance for education of all children with disabilities. Section 619 addresses issues concerning children age 3-5.

**Part C (Formerly Part H).** This is the section of IDEA that mandates Early Intervention for infants and toddlers with disabilities.

**PC (Policy Council).** A federally mandated policy-making body that is elected at the grantee level. At least 51% of the members must be parents of Head Start children currently enrolled in the grantee Head Start program. It may also include representatives of the community.

**PIR (Program Information Report).** The triplicate form that provides quantitative information on key characteristics of each Head Start program to ACF; in the spring of each year every Head Start grantee is required to complete and submit a PIR to their regional and national office.

**PIRedt (Program Information Report Electronic Data Transfer).** A software package developed as an alternative for grantees and delegates to submit their annual PIR data electronically instead of using the printed form.

**P.L. 94-142/P.L. 99-457.** These Education of all Handicapped Children Acts provided the foundation for a free appropriate public education for children with disabilities from age 3 through 21 in the least restrictive environment. Included are incentives for serving children birth through three. Head Start is mandated to recruit and enroll children with disabilities, to equal at least 10% of their total enrollment. (See IDEA)

**PMS (Payment Management System).** A disbursement system operated by the Federal Assistance Financing Branch located in the Office of Finance, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Management and Budget, HHS for sending grant funds to agencies.

**Policy Committee.** Committees set up at the delegate agency level when the program is administered in whole or in part by such an agency. At least 51% of the membership of the committee must be parents of children enrolled in that delegate agency program. It may also include representatives from the community.

**Prior Approval.** Written permission granted by an authorized grants office official in advance of an act that would result in either (1) the obligation or expenditure of funds, or (2) the performance or modification of an activity under the grant where such an approval is required.

**PRISM (Program Review Instrument for System Monitoring).** A system or “Framework” used to guide the federal on-site monitoring. The framework examines management systems, service delivery, and the relationship between systems and services. It uses a combination of interviews, focus groups, observation, and record reviews to gather data about program quality.

**Program Performance Standards.** These Federal Head Start regulations, the *Program Performance Standards for Operation of Head Start Programs by Grantees and Delegate Agencies*, sets forth agency programmatic functions, activities, and facilities required and necessary to meet the objectives and goals of the Head Start program as they relate to children and their families. Revised standards were implemented in January 1998.

**Program Options.** Head Start delivery models that may be selected to respond to the various needs of children and families in the local community.



**Program Review.** An on-site review by a regional team of consultants led by a regional ACF program specialist that determines Head Start program compliance (using the PRISM) with Head Start federal policies and standards.

**Program Specialist.** Federal staff of the regional office of the Administration for Children and Families who provide help and assistance to the local Head Start program. Programs should direct policy questions about Head Start policy to this person.

**Program Year.** The period during which grant funds must be expended or obligated. The program year beginning and ending dates for individual Head Start programs is not the same for every grantee.

**PYE (Program Year End).** The date that a grantee's current Head Start grant expires.

**Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).** The document developed by the grantee to respond to the non-compliance issues identified by the federal program on-site review.

**QUILT (Quality in Linking Together: *early education partnerships*).** A national training and technical assistance project funded by the Head Start and Child Care Bureaus to foster and support partnerships among child care, Head Start, and other early education programs at the local, state, tribal, and regional levels. Three organizations lead QUILT: Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) in Newton, Massachusetts; Community Development Institute (CDI) in Denver, Colorado; and the National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC) in Vienna, Virginia.

**RA (Regional Administrator).** The federal official that leads each federal ACF regional office.

**RFP (Request for Proposals).** The formal system whereby the federal government or other funders solicit bids from agencies and institutions.

**RO (Regional Offices).** There are ten regional offices that provide services to Head Start programs within a geographical area. The six New England States are served by the Region I ACF office. In addition, the American Indian/Alaska Native Program branch (AI/ANPB) works with programs that serve native populations. The Migrant and Seasonal Workers Program Branch (MSWPB) works with programs that serve migrant populations. Both AI/ANPB and MSWPB are housed within the Head Start Bureau.

**Screening.** A preliminary look at a child's level of functioning in fine and gross motor, cognitive, speech and language, social and emotional development, and hearing and vision, as well as health information. The primary purpose is to identify children who need referral for diagnostic evaluation. The screening process should include obtaining a developmental and health history, observations from the parents, and input from teachers based on their observations. The screening process must use a valid, reliable, culturally relevant and appropriately named standardized tool.

**Self-Assessment.** A required process whereby the staff, parents, and community of a local Head Start program annually assess their total program in relation to the Head Start Program Performance Standards and other federal requirements. The results of the assessment guide program decision-making.

**State Collaboration Grants.** ACF grants awarded to each state in the country for the purpose of collaborating and forging collaborative state relationships to benefit children and their families.

**TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families).** TANF replaced the former AFDC and JOBS programs. This block grant to states covers benefits, administration, expenses, and services. States determine eligibility and benefit levels and services provided to needy families, and there is no longer a federal entitlement.

**TN (Transmittal Notice).** ACF official notification sent to grantees on new policies, revisions of existing policy, or regulations. The first two digits referred to in the TN number designate the year in which the TN was released. The remaining digits indicate the order in which they were published during that year (i.e. 70.2 - published in 1970 the second release for the year).

**Training Guides.** Skill-based training guides developed in management, education, social services, health, transition, disability services, and parent involvement that programs are encouraged to use to train staff, parents, and the community. The guides are available free through the Head Start Bureau Publications Center.

**T/TA (Training and Technical Assistance).** An event or activity designed to improve or enhance the skills and development of program staff constitutes training. Technical assistance is a problem-solving event that utilizes the services of an experienced consultant.

**New England Resource Center at EDC**

**November 2001**