



JANE BROWN
Executive Director

Head Start

Head Start is a national program that provides comprehensive developmental and social services to America's low income preschool children and their families. The Head Start program began in 1965 to give children of low income families access to preschool programs. The program is administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, through the Administration for Children and Families.

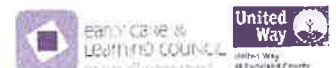
There are four major components of the Head Start program:

- **Education:** This component serves children's physical, cognitive, social and emotional growth. Great care and consideration is given to ethnic and cultural curriculum.
- **Health:** Families receive services related to medical, dental, mental and nutritional health. The Head Start program emphasizes the prevention of health problems.
- **Parental Involvement:** Parents are able to serve on advisory boards and program planning committees, volunteer in the classrooms and attend parent-education sessions. Head Start staff complete home visits as well.
- **Social Services:** Social service teams work to identify the needs of a family and find appropriate community-based referrals.

In 1994, Head Start established a program to serve low income infants, toddlers and pregnant women, called Early Head Start. The main focus of the program is to promote children's development in physical, social, emotional and cognitive areas, empower parents to develop better parenting skills and help parents reach their goals of economic independence. Services that are available through the Early Head Start program include:

- Home visits, which include developmentally appropriate early childhood education
- Comprehensive health services
- Support services for families, including case management, referrals to community resources and peer support

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