

BIG SANDY AREA HEAD START PROGRAM  
CHILD NUTRITION

**Goal Statement – Children receive nutritional services which promote child wellness.**

**B. Child Nutrition**

**Objective 1: The Big Sandy Area Head Start program and delegate agencies will work with families to identify each child's nutritional needs.**

1. Height and weight measurements of each child will be taken within the first 45 days of the child's enrollment; measurements will be taken again in April.
2. Hemoglobin/hematocrit determination will be completed by a health service provider.
3. Information about child/family eating patterns will be obtained through staff and parent interviews and nutrition assessment questionnaire.
4. **Nutrition issues as identified through the community assessment or the Health Services Advisory Committee will be considered when making a determination of needs.**

**Objective 2: To design and implement a nutrition program that meets the nutritional needs and feeding requirements of each child, including those with special dietary needs and disabilities.**

1. Funds with the USDA Food Consumer Service and Child Nutrition Programs will be used to cover payment of meals served. Head Start funds may be used to cover the allowable costs not covered by USDA.
2. Each child in a center based full-day program will receive meals and snacks that provide **1/3** to **2/3** of the child's daily nutritional needs, depending on the length of the program day.
3. For 3 to 5 year old in center based settings, the quantities and kinds of food served must conform to recommended serving sizes and minimum standards for meal patterns and nutrient standards **set forth by USDA.**
  - a. Food served will be low in fat, sugar, salt and high in nutrients.
  - b. Meal and snack periods in center-based settings will be appropriately scheduled and adjusted, where necessary, to ensure that individual needs are met.
  - c. Staff will promote effective dental hygiene among children in conjunction with meals.

- d. Parents and appropriate community resources will be involved in the planning, implementing, and evaluation of the nutrition services program.

**Objective 3: Big Sandy Area Head Start program and delegate agencies will ensure that nutritional services in center-based settings will contribute to the development and socialization of enrolled children.**

1. A variety of food will be served to broaden each child's food experience.
2. Children will be encouraged but not forced to eat or taste his or her food. Food will not be used as a reward or punishment.
3. Children, staff, and volunteers eat together and share the same menu to the extent possible. **Meal times will be used to foster communication and conversations that contribute to a child's learning, development, and socialization.**
4. Sufficient time is allowed for children to eat at a leisurely pace. The meal schedule will be posted in each classroom.
5. Medically based diets, religious based diets, or other dietary needs are accommodated.
6. Developmentally appropriate opportunities are provided for the involvement of children in **nutrition**-related activities.

**Objective 4: To assist Head Start families with nutrition.**

1. Big Sandy Area Head Start and delegate agencies will provide parent education activities. These activities include but are not limited to opportunities to learn about **the importance of physical activity, healthy eating, food budgeting, and healthy meal preparation.**
2. A nutrition newsletter will be provided regularly with information on nutrition education for the whole family, recipes, home & money management, and consumer education.

**Objective 5: To implement food safety and standards that comply with all federal, state and local safety and sanitation laws.**

1. The Head Start program will post evidence of compliance with all federal, state and local food safety and sanitation laws including those related to storage, preparation and service of food and the health of food handlers. The Big Sandy Area Head Start program will contract only with food service vendors that are licensed in accordance with state and local laws.