

Big Sandy Area C.A.P., Inc. - HEAD START  
Program Policies and Procedures

SUBJECT:

## **Community Assessment**

POLICY:

The grantee determines community strengths and needs.

- *This policy relates to [Head Start Performance Standards Part 1304.51](#)*

PROCEDURE:

1. A Community Assessment is conducted within the service area once every three years. Completion of the assessment will allow the program to collect data about community strengths, needs and resources, and to use that data to make decisions about the way the agency will respond through its program and services. (see Program Planning policy) Information is gathered by:
  - a. Securing demographic information from the Big Sandy Area Development District and Planning Council.
  - b. Consulting and securing statistical information from the CAA, school districts, health departments, Department of Social Services, and other community and child development agencies.
  - c. Reviewing census data/reports and population research results.
  - d. Reviewing parent and community surveys.
2. The Community Assessment will include the collection and analysis of the following information:
  - a. The demographic make-up of Head Start eligible children and families, including their estimated number, geographic location and racial and ethnic composition.
  - b. Other child development and child care programs that serve Head Start eligible children, including KERA, and other local pre-school

programs and the approximate number of Head Start eligible children served by each.

- c. The estimated number of children with disabilities four years old or younger, including types of disabilities and relevant services and resources provided to these children by community agencies.
  - d. Data concerning the education, health, nutrition and social service needs of Head Start eligible children and their families as defined by communities that serve young children.
  - e. Resources in the community that are used to address the needs of Head Start eligible children and their families, including assessments of their availability and accessibility.
3. The grantee and each delegate agency uses information from the community assessment to:
- a. Determine program philosophy and long range and short range program objectives.
  - b. Determine the type of services that are most needed and the program option or options to be implemented.
  - c. Determine the recruitment area to be served, if limited resources make it impossible to serve the entire service area.
  - d. Determine appropriate locations for centers and the areas to be served by home based programs.
  - e. Set criteria that define the children and families who will be given priority for recruitment and selection.
4. In each of the two years following completion of the Community Assessment, the program will review the county demographics and other statistical information to determine whether there have been significant changes in the information described in the assessment. The Community Assessment will be updated and plans adjusted to reflect these changes.
5. The grantee will collaborate with the delegate agencies, other social service agencies, health providers, childcare providers, the public schools in conducting and updating the Community Assessment and in interpreting its results.
6. Once the Community Assessment is completed, the Policy Council/Policy Committee, the agency's Board of Directors, Advisory Committees and staff will be given summarized data. This will allow the governing bodies, parents

and community members to have a voice in establishing Head Start's direction and service delivery strategies.

7. Community Assessment information is used, along with the program's Self-assessment findings, to establish long range goals of the program and shorter one-year program and financial objectives and to develop written plans for implementing services in each of the component areas (see Program Planning and Program Self-Assessment/Evaluation policies).

*Approved by the Policy Council October, 2007*