



Early Head Start Home-based Program



SCHOOL READINESS STARTS HERE.



What is the ABCD Early Head Start Home-based Program?

Early Head Start Home-based is a federally funded home visiting program that works with pregnant women, infants, toddlers and their families to help support school readiness, physical wellness, and the cognitive, language and social-emotional development of children.

The Early Head Start Home-based Program provides the following in-house services:

Education:

A Home Visitor and the child's family work together to create learning experiences using familiar items in the home and in the community. Elements of Early Intervention, the goals on a child's Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), are incorporated into the child's education experience if applicable.

During their weekly 90-minute home visit, Home Visitors share resources and help facilitate activities to promote different learning experiences that will help foster the growth and development of each child, while simultaneously supporting the parents/guardians in their crucial role as their child's first teachers.

Twice a month each family attends a two-hour socialization group at an Early Head Start Center to meet and mingle with other families who are also receiving home based services. These get-togethers give children and families opportunities to learn from each other and to build relationships.

There are specialists on staff dedicated specifically to supporting

the education of children with special needs, as well as their families.

Physical and Mental Health & Nutrition:

Children receive hearing, vision and nutrition screenings on an annual basis. Appropriate services, referrals, and resources to support their child's health are offered to families when needed. A healthy snack is served during socialization groups. Our programs work with each family to ensure their cultural dietary needs are valued and special diets are accommodated. Health and nutrition staff members offer families information and a variety of opportunities to learn about healthy living while engaging in their child's physical development.

A mental health professional is available to provide mental health services for children and families.





Family Support:

Home Visitors and other program staff work with each family to build a partnership to achieve parent-developed goals. Home Visitors provide resources and referrals, crisis intervention, and supports for families that reflect their needs and interests. Opportunities are provided for parents to connect with each other, with the program, and with the community at large, with a focus on supporting healthy family development, leadership and employment skills.

Parent Engagement & Program Governance:

Parent engagement is an essential part of the program. Early Head Start partners with parents to support their child's learning. Parents can be part of program planning by participating in meetings and providing feedback on the services provided. Many parents serve as members of the Parent Policy Council and/or Parent Committees, where they have a voice in decision making and program design. Parents also engage in their child's learning by volunteering in the program, attending field trips, participating in classes, groups, or workshops, and carrying out educational activities that are an extension of the Early Head Start home visiting learning opportunity.

How do I apply?

If you have a child who is 2.9 years old or younger, you may qualify for our home based option. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year. To schedule an appointment to complete an application you can:

- Call or visit your local ABCD Early Head Start program
- Call our Central office at 617-348-6388
- E-mail us at headstart@bostonabcd.org

When you set an appointment to complete an application you will be asked to provide the following documentation:

- Proof of your child's age: Birth certificate, baptismal certificate, passport or hospital record;
- Proof of residency: Utility bills, rental agreement/receipt, statement from a shelter, credit card statement or bank statement indicating your living address;
- Proof of family income: Income tax forms, pay stubs, TANF/TAFDC letter, SSI letter, worker's compensation or unemployment statements, child support or alimony agreements that reflect that family's annual income from all sources.



What should I expect if my child is accepted?

You will be notified by phone and mail if your child is accepted.

The custodial parent/guardian(s) of all infants and toddlers accepted into the Early Head Start program must meet with the program Health Manager and Nutritionist to complete a health and nutrition interview before home base services begin.

You can expedite the enrollment process by providing the program with the following information as soon as possible:

- A copy of your child's immunization records, most recent physical exam (dated within the last 12 months) and a Tuberculosis Risk Assessment. These documents may be required before a child can begin;
- A copy of your child's most recent dental exam. Children are required to have a dental exam within 90 days of enrollment. If your child does not have a dentist you can consent to dental care at the program through our Mobile Dental Service;
- If your child has a health issue or special condition there will be additional forms that must be completed before they enroll. Contact program staff to learn more about the forms that you and your child's doctor will have to complete;
- If your child has special needs, it is helpful to provide the program with a copy of your child's IFSP.

Once your child's paperwork is submitted to the program, you can expect the following:

Home Visits:

Your child's Home Visitor will call you to schedule a home visit. The purpose of the first home visit is to learn about your child's interest and activities, to complete the Ages and Stages assessment forms, and to discuss what you would like your child to achieve during their time in Early Head Start.



Program Orientation:

Each family is scheduled to attend an orientation at the program to ensure that you are informed about the services that you will be offered and how you can be involved in your child's education. The orientation is an opportunity for parents to meet program staff, learn about program policies and procedures, and hear about all the exciting engagement opportunities that are available.

Ongoing Parent Engagement and Partnerships with Staff:

Parent participation is supported and encouraged in all aspects of the program. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the program, and attend field trips and other school events and activities, as well as regular meetings, workshops and other parent education opportunities that we hope parents will take part in. Most importantly, families and staff partner on a one-to-one basis to support the goals that you have for your child and your family.

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For more information, contact:

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617.348.6388



**Head Start & Children's Services is a program of
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