



Early Head Start Pregnant Women Program



SCHOOL READINESS STARTS HERE.



What is the ABCD Early Head Start Pregnant Women Program?

The Early Head Start Pregnant Women Program assists pregnant women in obtaining proper prenatal care and education to ensure the growth and development of their unborn child. It is part of the federally funded Early Head Start program that helps support school readiness, physical wellness, cognitive, language and social-emotional development of children.

The Pregnant Women Program provides the following services:

Education:

Each pregnant woman is partnered with a Home Visitor or a Family Advocate. They establish a schedule with the pregnant woman and her family and determine how often they will meet and where the meeting will occur, such as the woman's home, the hosting Early Head Start program or in the community. During these meetings the Home Visitor/ Family Advocate provides resources, information and/or training opportunities for prenatal and postnatal education including: fetal development, the effects of alcohol and smoking on the fetus, labor and delivery, benefits of breast feeding, postpartum depression and infant care.

Physical and Mental Health & Nutrition:

A mental health professional is available to provide mental health services and support to pregnant women and families. The Home Visitor/Family Advocate will work with the parent to make any/all necessary referrals. A postpartum depression screening will be completed after the baby is born.

A Health Manager meets with each pregnant woman to complete a prenatal health questionnaire and provide information on the importance of prenatal care, dental care, and the affects of alcohol, smoking and drugs during pregnancy. The Health Manager will make any necessary referrals for dental care, prenatal care and substance abuse. Once the baby is born, the Health Manager will complete a Home Visit within two weeks to ensure the well being of the mother and baby.

A Nutritionist meets with each pregnant woman to complete a prenatal nutrition questionnaire and provide information on healthy eating during pregnancy, the benefits of breast feeding, referrals to WIC and other nutritional needs. Once the baby is born, the nutritionist will complete a nutrition questionnaire and provide more information on benefits of breast feeding, infant feeding and how to introduce new foods.



**Family Support:**

Program staff work to build a partnership with each family as they work together towards developed goals. Staff members provide resources and referrals, crisis intervention, and supports for families that reflect their needs and interests. Opportunities also are provided for families 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.

Family Engagement:

Family engagement is essential as Early Head Start partners with pregnant women to support their child's learning once the child is born. Special attention and planning takes place with the parents and the staff to ensure there is an appropriate plan in place for the born child to transition into one of our early childhood programs. Parents can be part of program planning by participating in meetings and providing feedback on the programs. 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 learning at their own time.

How do I apply?

If you are pregnant you may qualify for our Pregnant Women Program. 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 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.

After the baby is born you will need to provide:

- Proof of your child's age: Birth certificate, baptismal certificate, passport or hospital record
- A well child check by the health manager within two weeks of the birth.
- You and the home visitor/family advocate will be working on a transition plan for the baby to enter either the Early Head Start Center Based or Home Based program, depending upon you and your family's needs.

What should I expect if I get accepted?

You will be notified by phone and mail if you are accepted.

You must meet with the program Health Manager and Nutritionist to complete a prenatal health and nutrition interview once you have been enrolled.

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

- A copy of your most recent dental exam. If you do not have a dentist you can complete the referral form through the program.
- A copy of your prenatal appointments.
- A copy of your Health insurance card.

Home Visits:

A Home Visitor or Family Advocate will call you to schedule a home visit. The purpose of the first home visit is to learn about you, your family and go over the outline of the program. A family partnership plan will be created with goals you want to achieve and a flexible schedule of dates and times for meetings.

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 our 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. 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.



**BE THE
DIFFERENCE.**

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Yvette Rodriguez

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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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