

HEAD START

Reaching Out to the Hispanic Community

Since its inception in 1965, the Head Start program has provided comprehensive developmental services to millions of low-income, Hispanic preschool children and their families. During the Clinton Administration, Hispanic enrollment has increased by 70,000 and at a rate nearly twice as fast as non-Hispanic enrollment. Head Start now reaches approximately 220,000 Hispanic children (183,000 excluding Puerto Rico) each year. Despite these increases, Hispanic children remain under-represented in Head Start, comprising 23.3 percent of Head Start enrollment (excluding Puerto Rico) compared to 29.8 percent of all low income, pre-school children in the nation. The Head Start program is committed to identifying and resolving barriers to fully equitable access and ensuring culturally appropriate services.

Head Start is increasing outreach to Hispanics through program expansion.

- Head Start has increased by 50% the number of points awarded to expansion grant applicants who emphasize outreach to under-served populations, such as seasonal farm workers, recent immigrant families and non-English speaking groups.
- Head Start is increasing the number of its grant application reviewers who have expertise in serving language minority children as part of its ongoing commitment to ensure cultural diversity on review panels.
- Head Start is investing an additional \$5 million in FY99 for targeted services to reach 1,000 new children of migrant and seasonal farm workers.
- The President's FY 2000 Budget includes \$23 million for Migrant Head Start, to improve quality and reach as many as 2,000 new children.

Through training, technical assistance and monitoring efforts, Head Start will ensure that local programs consider the needs of all eligible populations.

- Head Start is working with and monitoring programs to ensure full utilization of community assessments to better target outreach, recruitment and enrollment of under-served populations.
- Head Start will provide specialized technical assistance to ten communities where changing local demographics have resulted in significant under-served populations.
- Head Start's recently expanded Training and Technical Assistance Network will work with local Head Start programs to customize services to better respond to the needs of under-served populations.

Head Start will fund Hispanic-serving colleges and universities to train teachers.

- Beginning early in FY2000, Head Start will make an estimated \$750,000 in training and technical assistance funding available to Hispanic-serving colleges and universities through a competitive process.
- Funding will be used to help more Head Start teachers earn degrees in early childhood education and to encourage institutions to ensure that their curricula promote cultural competency among early childhood educators.

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Since its inception in 1965, the Head Start program has provided comprehensive developmental services to millions of low-income, Hispanic preschool children and their families. During the Clinton Administration, Hispanic enrollment has increased by 70,000 and at a rate nearly twice as fast as non-Hispanic enrollment. Head Start now reaches over 180,000 Hispanic children each year. The Head Start program is furthering its longstanding commitment to meeting the needs of Hispanics through a variety of steps to ensure access and culturally appropriate services. *acknowledges problem*

Head Start is increasing outreach to Hispanics through program expansion.

In the FY1999 expansion process, all applicants were strongly encouraged to reach out to special under-served populations — including seasonal farmworkers, recent immigrant families and non-English speaking groups — and the points awarded to applicants for their emphasis on such outreach rose from 20 to 30 points. Although the awards have not yet been ~~fully~~ finalized for this year, we know that many expansion awards will focus on serving these groups. Moreover, Head Start has been given the opportunity to serve the children of seasonal farmworkers, and will provide up to \$5 million to reach up to 1,000 additional children of migrant and seasonal farmworkers in FY 1999. The President's FY 2000 budget includes a \$23 million request for Migrant Head Start that would improve quality and reach as many as 2,000 new children. ✓

Head Start is utilizing training and technical assistance, as well as monitoring, to ensure that local programs are considering the needs of all eligible populations.

In an Information Memorandum issued in July 1999, Head Start reiterated its policy of assuring that all eligible families within a grantee's service area are given fair consideration for enrollment. Grantees were also reminded that they are required to conduct community assessments in order to base recruitment on areas of need. Head Start plans to work closely with 10 or more communities where changing community demographics have resulted in significant under-served populations, and notified all grantees that technical assistance is available in this area. The Head Start Bureau hopes to better track this outreach through increased attention during monitoring visits and through an assessment of demographic data.

Head Start will fund Hispanic-serving colleges and universities to train teachers.

A new initiative will begin in FY 2000 making training and technical assistance funding available to Hispanic-serving colleges and universities through a competitive process. Successful applicants will use these funds to provide training to teachers from nearby Head Start programs. Not only will this training allow more teachers to receive early childhood degrees, but Head Start will also encourage these institutions to ensure that their curricula promote cultural competency among early childhood educators.

Head Start seeks to strengthen the cultural and linguistic capacity of local programs.

Head Start's Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) Network has been revised and expanded through a new series of grants to organizations that will work closely with local Head Start programs and customize services to better respond to varying local needs. T/TA providers employ the services of staff and consultants who reflect the culture of the Head Start programs in their areas.

THE HEAD START PROGRAM: An Overview of Services for Hispanic Children and Families

Head Start is a national program providing comprehensive developmental services to low-income preschool children and their families. To help children achieve their full potential, Head Start provides comprehensive health, nutritional, educational, social and other services. Operating within a set of federal performance standards, Head Start programs are locally designed and provide services through a variety of program options, such as center-based and home-based services, adapted to the needs of the children and families enrolled in the program. Begun in 1965 as part of the War on Poverty, Head Start has served almost 18 million children over the past 34 years.

Operating with a \$4,660,000,000 budget in FY 1999, Head Start will fund services for a projected 835,000 pre-school children from families with incomes below the poverty line. Special efforts are made to serve children with disabilities and each local program must reserve ten percent of its enrollment for such children.

In recognition of the mounting evidence of the importance of the earliest years of life to children's later development, the Early Head Start program was created in 1995. It provided child development and family support services to 35,000 pregnant woman, infants and toddlers in FY 1998 and will expand to reach nearly 39,000 enrollees in FY 1999.

Head Start grants are awarded directly to local private and government agencies by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the Department of Health and Human Services. In FY 1998, 1513 local grantees plus approximately 600 sub-grantees provided services in almost 16,000 communities throughout the country. Because Head Start services are designed and operated at the local level with parent participation, efforts to support diversity have been an integral part of Head Start since it was created.

The same grantees continue to receive funds from year to year, provided they maintain high quality services that conform to Head Start Performance Standards. Local programs receive a comprehensive federal review at least once every three years. The Administration's recent efforts to assure that all grantees are providing high quality services has resulted in 100 grants being terminated or relinquished since 1993 and new sponsors chosen through a competitive process.

Head Start Services for Hispanic Children and Families

The Head Start Bureau seeks to address two critical areas to ensure that Head Start programming meets the growing needs of Hispanic children and families:

- 1) Ensuring that Hispanic children have fair and equitable access to Head Start services; and

- 2) Ensuring that Head Start services meet the cultural and linguistic needs of Hispanic children and families.

Access to Head Start Services for Hispanic Children and Families

Since its inception in 1965, Head Start has served millions of Hispanic children across the nation. In FY 1998, 217,000 of the more than 822,000 children funded by Head Start were Hispanic. This equals 26.4 percent of Head Start enrollment. Excluding the 32,249 Hispanic children in Puerto Rico, Hispanic children constitute 23.3 percent of total Head Start enrollment.

The Head Start program has made steady progress over time to extend greater access to Head Start services to Hispanic families. Over the past decade, Hispanic children have received an increasingly larger portion of Head Start services. Since FY 1992, *Hispanic enrollment (excluding Puerto Rico) has increased 62% while non-Hispanic enrollment has increased 27%*. In other words, Hispanic enrollment has risen nearly twice as fast as non-Hispanic enrollment.

Despite these increases, Hispanic children remain underrepresented in Head Start. In 1997, young (3-4 years old), low-income Hispanic children represented 29.8 percent of all low-income pre-school children in the U.S., compared to 23.3 percent in Head Start (excluding Puerto Rico). ACF is committed to identifying and resolving barriers to fully equitable access and service for Hispanic children in Head Start. The Head Start Bureau is taking steps to increase and improve outreach to Hispanics and other underrepresented populations.

The following table demonstrates the changes in Head Start enrollment over the last decade:

1989	431,244	79,487	18.4%
1990	515,899	93,974	18.2%
1991	556,596	101,489	18.2%
1992	592,047	113,817	19.2%
1993	682,597	140,031	20.5%
1994	708,348	145,573	20.6%
1995	718,578	155,556	21.6%
1996	720,333	156,779	21.8%

1997	761,588	174,963	23.0%
1998	789,043	183,824	23.3%

Source: Head Start PIR & Census Bureau

Given the President's goal of providing Head Start services to 1,000,000 children by the year 2002 and the actions we are taking to improve outreach and expand access, we anticipate significant increases in participation by Hispanic children and families.

In communities with traditionally large Hispanic populations, Head Start programs already report substantial percentages of Hispanic enrollees. For example, in Houston and Miami, Hispanics comprise almost 40% of children served, in New York and San Diego Hispanics represent approximately 50% of Head Start enrollments and in San Antonio and Los Angeles, this figure is as high as 75%. Head Start has also demonstrated flexibility in adapting services to the needs of migrant farmworker families, who are largely Hispanic, including those who follow the growing season from Florida to Maine or from Texas to Idaho. Programs meet the critical child care needs of farmworker families by operating long hours during harvest seasons and serving children from birth to five years. Some programs themselves migrate, following families as they move "up stream." In the last ten years, enrollment in Head Start programs for migrant farmworkers has increased from 18,500 to almost 37,000 children, 95 percent of whom are Hispanic. FY 1998 funding was \$162,204,000.

Hispanics appear to be most underrepresented in Head Start communities where they have not historically had a significant presence, but where Hispanic populations have developed more recently. While some programs have adapted more quickly, other grantees have been slow to change their recruitment strategies, hiring patterns and services to meet the needs of the new and growing Hispanic populations in their service areas. Given the limitations of relying on quickly outdated census data to understand how these demographic shifts compare to existing services in counties, Head Start will initiate an assessment of community demographics and enrolled populations to identify where Hispanics and other underserved populations are concentrated.

In order to address these challenges and achieve continued improvements in the recruitment of underserved populations, Head Start has begun to engage in an array of activities to ensure fair and equitable access to Head Start services for Hispanic children and families, including:

- Increasing outreach to Hispanics through program expansion;
- Providing information and technical assistance to promote recruitment of Hispanics;
- Assuring equitable access and efforts to reach underserved Hispanic communities following grant terminations and relinquishments; and
- Monitoring programs to ensure that grantees consider the needs of new

populations.

Increasing Outreach through Program Expansion

ACF currently provides specific incentives for local Head Start grantees to reach under-served populations with Head Start expansion funding. Starting in FY 1998, the Head Start Bureau added language to its competitive expansion announcement encouraging grantees to focus on under-served populations. This language was strengthened in FY 1999 and the point system for grant awards was revised to put more weight on addressing the existing need for service, particularly among new or under-served populations. Specifically, the language in this year's expansion announcement said:

This expansion provides an opportunity for Head Start programs to reach neighborhoods, communities and groups within their service area that they have been unable to serve in the past. These may include a variety of special populations of low-income families, such as seasonal farmworkers, recent immigrant families, non-English speaking groups or American Indian families outside of Federal Indian Reservations. All applicants are encouraged to base their applications on a careful assessment of the community, including identification of special populations who are not being served by Head Start.

Applicants are then rated on, among other things, the degree to which they have identified new and under-represented populations, and their strategy for serving these groups. The points awarded in this area increased by 50% in FY99 and now represent close to a third of the total points.

ACF will include new language in the FY 2000 expansion announcement that puts additional emphasis on reaching under-served populations, and will evaluate the effectiveness of giving greater weight to outreach under-served population when scoring expansion grant applications. Conversely, an applicant's failure to use the community needs assessment data or adhere to Head Start regulations will be considered in making expansion grant decisions. In addition, ACF will increase the number of grant application reviewers who have expertise in serving language minority children, so that each set of proposal review teams includes persons with such expertise as appropriate.

Expansion of Head Start for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Families

In the 1998 reauthorization of Head Start, Congress gave Head Start explicit authority to serve the children of seasonal farmworkers, and the Bureau is mobilizing to take advantage of this opportunity through the Migrant Head Start program. Seasonal farmworkers are typically families that were formerly migrant workers but who decided to settle in a particular agricultural community. To begin better meeting the needs of these families, most of whom are not being served by Head Start, this year's Head Start

expansion effort is making available up to \$5 million to increase enrollment of migrant and seasonal farmworker families by up to 1,000 children. The vast majority of seasonal farmworkers are Hispanic.

The President's Budget includes a \$23 million increase for Migrant Head Start in FY 2000, which, in addition to providing approximately \$13 million for cost-of-living and quality improvement increases, would provide \$10 million to serve as many as 2000 additional migrant and seasonal farmworker children.

Providing Information and Technical Assistance to Promote Recruitment of Hispanics

ACF will issue an Information Memorandum by the end of July 1999 that will reiterate Head Start's policy to assure all eligible families within a grantee's service area are given fair consideration for enrollment in the Head Start program. Grantees will be reminded that 45CFR Part 1305.3 requires them to conduct community assessments at least once every three years. This assessment provides data on "the demographic make up of Head Start eligible children and families, including their estimated number, geographic location and ethnic composition." This information is then used by each Head Start grantee to decide in which part of its service area it will recruit. The need for Head Start services should be the basis for determining which communities to serve, and how many children in each community to enroll, not historical enrollment patterns. Grantees will be advised that they must be sensitive to demographic changes in their service area and that as new families and children move into their service area, they must also be given consideration for enrollment.

To assist grantees in this process the Head Start Bureau will work with its training and technical assistance (T/TA) providers to ensure that they assist grantees who are experiencing demographic changes within their service area in designing their programs, when appropriate, so that grantees can better serve new populations in culturally sensitive programs.

Head Start is initiating an effort, with contractor assistance, to collect demographic data at the county level which can be used to make judgements about how well grantees are doing in terms of enrolling families that reflect the overall make-up of their community. In FY 2000, Head Start will use this data to identify at least ten communities where the unmet need of emerging populations is most dramatic. ACF will then work closely with existing and potential grantees and leaders in these communities in order to implement various outreach and T/TA strategies designed to improve representation of under-represented children, and, where appropriate, facilitate the participation in Head Start of local organizations representing these groups. In this way, while generally broadening its efforts using current known techniques, ACF can also (1) develop and test the

effectiveness of new T/TA and outreach strategies designed to improve the representation of underserved children into Head Start; (2) actively work with grantees and local leaders to ensure that the skills, expertise and capabilities of local organizations in underrepresented communities are effectively utilized; (3) provide focused attention to the communities with the most dramatic problems; and (4) ultimately, point to these model communities as examples where the representation of underserved groups has improved and where that progress has effectively drawn upon the skills of community groups dedicated to addressing the needs of under-represented populations.

In areas with large under-represented populations, ACF will work with grantees to identify social service organizations that work with families from these populations. For smaller Head Start grantees, these organizations can serve as valuable partners in recruiting from new communities. Where grantees are large enough to have sub-grantees, they will be encouraged to consider making these organizations delegate agencies based on their demonstrated potential to run a Head Start program and their commitment to hire culturally representative staff.

Assuring Equitable Access and Efforts to Reach Under-Served Hispanic Communities following Grant Terminations and Relinquishments

If Head Start grantees relinquish their grants or are terminated due to an inability to meet Head Start Performance Standards, an assessment will be made to determine if service areas should be reconfigured to assure equitable access for all children in the community. For instance, when the large Denver Head Start grantee was terminated, ACF chose to split the single Denver grant up into several smaller grants that better met local needs. In doing so, one of the grantees, Rocky Mountain SER/Jobs for Progress, was specifically chosen to help address the unmet needs of eligible Hispanic families in the Denver area. A similar process occurred in Houston, which resulted in new services to Hispanic children and families and the funding of Avance, Inc. as a Head Start grantee. ACF is institutionalizing this process of outreach and community needs assessment, including the needs of Hispanics and other under-served populations, as grant terminations or relinquishments occur.

Monitoring Programs to Ensure that Grantees Consider the Needs of New Populations

Each Head Start program, as required by law, must be monitored on-site at least once every three years by a team led by a federal employee. In the Information Memorandum it plans to issue by July 1999, ACF will include a discussion on the role of the monitoring process in helping grantees work towards greater equity in reaching under-served populations. ACF regional staff who monitor Head Start programs will build on current procedures to create a stronger emphasis on assuring that grantees have conducted

comprehensive community assessments and have used the data from these assessments to design their Head Start programs. Grantees will need to be able to clearly explain why they have chosen to serve the specific communities and populations they have and, conversely, why they are not serving other communities or populations. Grantees that are not using community assessment data properly or adhering to Head Start regulations regarding the selection and recruitment of children will be found "out-of-compliance" and will be required to implement a corrective action plan. Head Start staff will closely monitor these grantees to ensure that they are in compliance within one year. This approach will help assure that all families eligible for Head Start will be given fair and equitable consideration for enrolling their child in Head Start and that Head Start programs will increasingly serve families that are representative of the diversity of their service area.

Multiculturalism and Bilingualism in Head Start

Head Start is a community-based program and, from its inception, local Head Start projects have attempted to mirror the culture of the communities in which they operate. In 1972, Head Start codified this approach as part of regulations known as the Head Start Performance Standards, requiring that children's culture be considered in their individualized education plans, in the staffing of classrooms, and by the involvement of their parents in developing curricula and program activities.

During the 1970's, Head Start supported the development of bilingual curricula designed to support cognitive and social growth in children and disseminated these curricula to programs throughout the country. In 1978 a "Bibliography of Bilingual/Bicultural Preschool Material for Spanish Speaking Children" was developed for use by programs in planning and implementing their curricula.

In 1991, furthering efforts to emphasize multicultural programming, Head Start established "Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs" in consultation with program staff, parents and experts in the field. In 1998 these principles were incorporated into newly revised Head Start Performance Standards. These Standards contain a number of requirements to assure that the varying needs of different cultures and linguistic groups are met. All Head Start programs must:

- Use linguistically and culturally appropriate early childhood development approaches and create an environment of acceptance that supports and respects culture, language, and ethnicity;
- Hire teachers who demonstrate an understanding of children's family culture and, whenever possible, speak the children's language;
- Offer nutrition programs that include a variety of foods which consider cultural and

ethnic preferences;

- Involve parent's in the development of the program's curriculum, plans for health and nutrition services and program governance (for example, parents must approve all hiring of staff);
- Communicate with parents in the parent's primary or preferred language or through an interpreter and;
- Give preference to parents in hiring — a practice which has led to the fact that over 30 percent of Head Start's staff are current or former Head Start parents.

Understanding Needs and Capacity Around Multiculturalism and Bilingualism

- To determine both the community need and the program effective in this area, ACF recently conducted *The Descriptive Study of Head Start's Bilingual and Multicultural Program Services*, which will be released in the summer of 1999. This study determined that 140 languages were spoken within the currently enrolled Head Start population, and that the most common language, after English, is Spanish. The following are selected findings of this study concerning Hispanic children and families:

➤ Head Start staff general serve. There are slightly fewer Hispanic staff than there are Hispanic children. This is true for all ethnic groups except White. When there are both children and staff who speak Spanish there is usually one Spanish speaking staff member for every seven children.

➤ In response to changing staff; hired parents as translators; used volunteers from the same ethnic group; opened new centers; modified outreach procedures, including printing recruiting materials in families' home languages.

➤ A number of additional parent meetings; providing post-immigration services to families; providing training to Head Start staff in multicultural sensitivity; developing or selecting multicultural and bilingual materials for use at home and at school; and bilingual curriculum development.

- A recently completed *Study of the Characteristics of Families Served by Head Start Migrant Programs*, which will also be released in the summer of 1999, found that

Head Start has been successful in developing unique approaches to meeting the needs of migrant families. Migrant Head Start families are very poor, with larger families often earning no more than 50 percent of federal poverty guidelines. Less than a third of families speak or read English well and almost half did not complete elementary school. Migrant Head Start centers are generally staffed with bilingual/bicultural workers with backgrounds similar to those of migrant families. The study found that staff are responsive to families' needs and parents report that they are generally very pleased with the care their children are receiving. The study estimated that Migrant Head Start programs were serving approximately 28 percent of the eligible migrant children.

- The *Family and Child Experiences Survey* (FACES) is currently piloting methods of assessing children's language and literacy development, both in one-on-one assessments and in the classroom context, that are sensitive to the fact that English is not a first language for some children. Among direct cognitive assessments, FACES assesses children's vocabulary, book knowledge, pre-writing, numeracy, and letter recognition at entry into the program, at the end of the program (either one or two years) and again after a year of kindergarten. Children whose primary language was Spanish were assessed in Spanish at baseline; if they continued in a Spanish-speaking program (e.g., in Puerto Rico) they were assessed in Spanish again in the follow-up assessment. If the program language was primarily English, they were assessed in English in the follow-up. Cognitive assessments were combined with assessments of social-emotional development, both by observation and by parent and teacher report, since such factors also play a role in the child's school readiness. Classroom assessments of the quality of teacher-child interaction and language learning opportunities are also related to children's performance on vocabulary measures.

In order to capture the experiences of all families involved in Head Start, FACES researchers offered families the opportunity to be interviewed in their home language. Out of individual parent interviews with approximately 3200 families (a nationally representative sample that included Puerto Rico), 16.9% of the families chose to be interviewed in Spanish. This study made the encouraging finding that parent participation in the program did not vary by primary language; participation (i.e. volunteering in centers, participating in classroom activities) was equal across English-speaking and non-English speaking families.

Supporting the Transition of Hispanic Children into School

Head Start's new Performance Standards require that special services be provided for children and parents as children make the transition from Head Start to school. A national, multi-site evaluation is testing the hypothesis that continuous, comprehensive Head Start like services will maintain and enhance the early gains achieved by Head Start children. Demonstration sites in Carpentersville, Illinois, Phoenix, Arizona, Dade

County, Florida and Worcester, Massachusetts are tailoring these transitional services to the needs of bilingual Hispanic children. These demonstration programs are contributing to the development of effective, replicable strategies for programs nation-wide. In FY 1998, each local Head Start program is receiving supplemental funds to support transition activities. Funding totals \$35,000,000 nationally.

Head Start seeks to ensure that these transitions — from home or child care to Early Head Start to Head Start to public school — are as smooth as possible for children from every background. To do this, the Head Start Act requires Head Start grantees to coordinate with the local educational agency and the schools in which children in Head Start will enroll. The Head Start Performance Standards build on this requirement, calling for programs to develop and maintain procedures to support successful transitions. Further, these Performance Standards outline a series of activities that Head Start programs must undertake to ensure that parents are prepared to stay involved in their children's education and serve as their advocates. These transition efforts are tailored to the individual child and family, and are therefore culturally relevant and take into account a child's special needs regarding English as a second language.

Providing Training and Technical Assistance to Strengthen Cultural & Linguistic Capacity

- Head Start's Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) Network is being revised and expanded through a new series of grants to organizations that will work closely with local Head Start programs and customize services to better respond to varying local needs. Under the current contracts, there are 28 providers, 16 of which are public educational institutions and 12 of which are private non-profits. Of the private non-profits, one third of the contracts are with Hispanic-owned organizations. T/TA providers employ the services of staff and consultants who reflect the culture of the Head Start programs in their areas. T/TA is conducted in Spanish and simultaneous translation is provided when required.
- Head Start materials that are of interest to parents are routinely published in Spanish as well as English. For example, a video tape entitled "Linking Our Voices" about parental involvement in Head Start is available in Spanish and has been provided to all programs.

Providing Teacher Training through Hispanic-Serving Institutions of Higher Education

- A new initiative, focused on Hispanic colleges and universities, will be initiated this year. ACF will make available funds through a competitive process to institutions of higher

learning that serve significant numbers of Hispanic students. Successful applicants will be required to use these funds to provide training to Head Start teachers from nearby Head Start programs. This training will eventually result in these teachers receiving degrees in the field of early childhood education. We will also encourage these institutions to ensure that their early childhood education curricula foster cultural competency among those who are being trained to work with young children, in Head Start as well as other early childhood programs.

Summary of Efforts to Make Head Start Increasingly Inclusive of Hispanics

ACF is committed to ensuring that Hispanic children and families have access to Head Start services and that these services are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

In order to increase enrollment of Hispanic children, the Head Start Bureau is taking concrete steps to boost outreach to underserved Hispanic communities. The Bureau is providing incentives to grantees to use expansion money to reach out to under-served populations (including a special allocation for outreach to migrant and seasonal farmworkers) and is working with Hispanic organizations to generate applications for funding from Hispanic groups when opportunities arise. The Bureau is also re-emphasizing the importance of a meaningful community needs assessment process through an upcoming Information Memorandum to grantees, additional training and technical assistance, and a stronger emphasis on this component during program monitoring. The Bureau will target special training and technical assistance to communities where the unmet need of emerging populations and traditionally under-represented groups is most dramatic. Finally, the Bureau is setting a new standard using grants that have been terminated or relinquished as opportunities to reconfigure the grantees in a local area to reflect changing community needs; this will allow ACF to seek out Hispanic leadership and representation in previously under-served communities.

Head Start has a strong record of providing multicultural and bilingual services and plans to take steps to build off these strengths. Head Start will continue to support and initiate research that recognizes diversity and seeks to answer critical questions about the program's capacity to meet cultural or linguistic needs. The Bureau will also seek to use current demonstration projects focusing on the needs of Hispanic children as they transition from the Head Start program to school to help programs better address these needs. Through a revised and expanded series of training and technical assistance grants, programs will be assisted in strengthening their multicultural and bilingual services. Finally, the Bureau will create a new initiative that will provide Hispanic-serving colleges and universities with special funding to provide early childhood training and education to Head Start teachers.

This array of activities will not only lead to more and better services for Hispanic children and families, but in doing so, it will create an even stronger, more inclusive Head Start program as we move into the next century.

Revised July 9, 1999

THE HEAD START PROGRAM: Steps to Improve Access for Under-served Populations

Since its inception in 1965 as a summer program launched during President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty," Head Start has helped more than 16 million children and their families. Head Start was designed to help break the cycle of poverty by providing preschool children with a program to meet their emotional, educational, social, health, nutritional, and psychological needs. The idea was that, with a little help—a *head start*—children from even the most disadvantaged families could begin elementary school at the same level as their more advantaged peers.

In the last three decades, the United States population has undergone some dramatic demographic changes yielding a far more culturally diverse population. Children in Head Start now come from scores of different countries and speak approximately 140 different languages. While Head Start has always been committed to providing culturally relevant services to children and families from all racial and ethnic backgrounds, these changing national demographics mean that Head Start must continue to strengthen efforts to encourage the participation of new populations and tailor programs to meet their unique needs.

1. Give greater priority to under-served groups in the expansion grant process.

ACF currently provides specific incentives for local Head Start grantees to reach under-served populations with Head Start expansion funding. Starting in FY 1998, the Head Start Bureau added language to its competitive expansion announcement encouraging grantees to focus on under-served populations. This language was strengthened in FY 1999 and the point system for grant awards was revised to put more weight on addressing the existing need for service, particularly among new or under-served populations. Specifically, the language in this year's expansion announcement said:

This expansion provides an opportunity for Head Start programs to reach neighborhoods, communities and groups within their service area that they have been unable to serve in the past. These may include a variety of special populations of low-income families, such as seasonal farmworkers, recent immigrant families, non-English speaking groups or American Indian families outside of Federal Indian Reservations. All applicants are encouraged to base their applications on a careful assessment of the community, including identification of special populations who are not being served by

Head Start.

Applicants are then rated on, among other things, the degree to which they have identified new and under-represented populations, and their strategy for serving these groups. The points awarded in this area increased by 50% in FY99 and now represent close to a third of the total points.

Next Step: ACF will include new language in the FY 2000 expansion announcement that puts additional emphasis on reaching under-served populations, and will evaluate the effectiveness of giving greater weight to outreach under-served population when scoring expansion grant applications. Conversely, an applicant's failure to use the community needs assessment data or adhere to Head Start regulations will be considered in making expansion grant decisions. In addition, ACF will increase the number of grant application reviewers who have expertise in serving language minority children, so that each set of proposal review teams includes persons with such expertise as appropriate.

2. Increase funding to serve the children of migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

In the 1998 reauthorization of Head Start, Congress gave Head Start explicit authority to serve the children of seasonal farmworkers, and the Bureau is mobilizing to take advantage of this opportunity through the Migrant Head Start program. Seasonal farmworkers are typically families that were formerly migrant workers but who decided to settle in a particular agricultural community. To begin better meeting the needs of these families, most of whom are not being served by Head Start, this year's Head Start expansion effort is making available up to \$5 million to increase enrollment of migrant and seasonal farmworker families by up to 1,000 children. The vast majority of seasonal farmworkers are Hispanic, the largest under-served population in Head Start.

Next Step: The President's Budget includes a \$23 million increase for Migrant Head Start in FY 2000, which, in addition to providing approximately \$13 million for cost-of-living and quality improvement increases, would provide \$10 million to serve as many as 2000 additional migrant and seasonal farmworker children.

3. Provide information, training, and technical assistance to promote the recruitment of children and families from under-represented populations, and identify culturally appropriate social service organizations in the area to serve them.

Head Start's training and technical assistance network employs consultants with expertise in the

field of conducting community assessments and using the data collected from these assessments to design programs that most effectively serve all families in the community. Grantees who need assistance conducting a thorough and accurate community assessment, or who have not appropriately used the assessment to design their program, have access to these consultants who are able to help programs better serve all members of the community with culturally relevant and responsive programs.

Next Step: ACF will issue an Information Memorandum by the end of July 1999 that will reiterate Head Start's policy to assure all eligible families within a grantee's service area are given fair consideration for enrollment in the Head Start program. Grantees will be reminded that 45CFR Part 1305.3 requires them to conduct community assessments at least once every three years. This assessment provides data on "the demographic make up of Head Start eligible children and families, including their estimated number, geographic location and ethnic composition." This information is then used by each Head Start grantee to decide in which part of its service area it will recruit. The need for Head Start services should be the basis for determining which communities to serve, and how many children in each community to enroll, not historical enrollment patterns. Grantees will be advised that they must be sensitive to demographic changes in their service area and that as new families and children move into their service area, they must also be given consideration for enrollment.

Next Step: Head Start is initiating an effort, with contractor assistance, to collect demographic data at the county level which can be used to make judgements about how well grantees are doing in terms of enrolling families that reflect the overall make-up of their community. Once this data collection is complete, Head Start will, as discussed below, focus on working with grantees that seem to be having the most difficulty serving all the populations of their communities.

Next Step: To assist grantees in this process the Head Start Bureau will work with its training and technical assistance (T/TA) providers to ensure that they assist grantees who are experiencing demographic changes within their service area in designing their programs, when appropriate, so that grantees can better serve new populations in culturally sensitive programs. In FY 2000, ACF will, using the data collected through the process discussed above, identify at least ten communities where the unmet need of emerging populations is most dramatic. ACF will then work closely with existing and potential grantees and leaders in these communities in order to implement various outreach and T/TA strategies designed to improve representation of under-represented children, and, where appropriate, facilitate the participation in Head Start of local organizations representing these groups. In this way, while generally broadening its efforts using current techniques, ACF can also (1) develop and test the effectiveness of new T/TA and outreach strategies designed to improve the representation of underserved children into Head Start; (2) actively work with grantees and local leaders to ensure that the skills, expertise and capabilities of local organizations in underrepresented communities are effectively utilized; (3) provide focused attention to the communities with the most dramatic problems; and (4)

ultimately, point to these model communities as examples where the representation of underserved groups has improved and where that progress has effectively drawn upon the skills of community groups dedicated to addressing the needs of under-represented populations.

In areas with large under-represented populations, ACF will work with grantees to identify social service organizations that work with families from these populations. For smaller Head Start grantees, these organizations can serve as valuable partners in recruiting from new communities. Where grantees are large enough to have sub-grantees, they will be encouraged to consider making these organizations delegate agencies based on their demonstrated potential to run a Head Start program and their commitment to hire culturally representative staff.

4. Assure equitable access and efforts to reach under-served communities following grant terminations and relinquishments.

If Head Start grantees relinquish their grants or are terminated due to an inability to meet Head Start Performance Standards, an assessment will be made to determine if service areas should be reconfigured to assure equitable access for all children in the community. For instance, when the large Denver Head Start grantee was terminated, ACF chose to split the single Denver grant up into several smaller grants that better met local needs. In doing so, one of the grantees, Rocky Mountain SER/Jobs for Progress, was specifically chosen to help address the unmet needs of eligible Hispanic families in the Denver area. A similar process occurred in Houston, which resulted in new services to Hispanic children and families and the funding of Avance, Inc. as a Head Start grantee.

Next Step: ACF is institutionalizing this process of outreach and community needs assessment, including the needs of underserved populations, as grant terminations or relinquishments occur.

5. Reinforce monitoring to ensure that grantees serve new and under-represented populations.

Each Head Start program, as required by law, must be monitored, on-site, at least once every three years by a team led by a federal employee.

Next Step: In the Information Memorandum it plans to issue by July 1999, ACF will include a discussion on the role of the monitoring process in helping grantees work towards greater equity in reaching under-served populations. ACF regional staff who monitor Head Start programs will build on current procedures to create a stronger emphasis on assuring that grantees have conducted comprehensive community assessments and have used the data from these assessments to design their Head Start programs. Grantees will need to be able to clearly explain why they have chosen to serve the specific communities and populations they have and,

conversely, why they are not serving other communities or populations. Grantees that are not using community assessment data properly or adhering to Head Start regulations regarding the selection and recruitment of children will be found "out-of-compliance" and will be required to implement a corrective action plan. Head Start staff will closely monitor these grantees to ensure that they are in compliance within one year. This approach will help assure that all families eligible for Head Start will be given fair and equitable consideration for enrolling their child in Head Start and that Head Start programs will increasingly serve families that are representative of the diversity of their service area.

6. Continue to track and provide updates on outreach to under-served communities.

Head Start will issue a report by the end of FY 2000, detailing its efforts and accomplishments in extending access to under-represented populations.