



Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships

Getting Started





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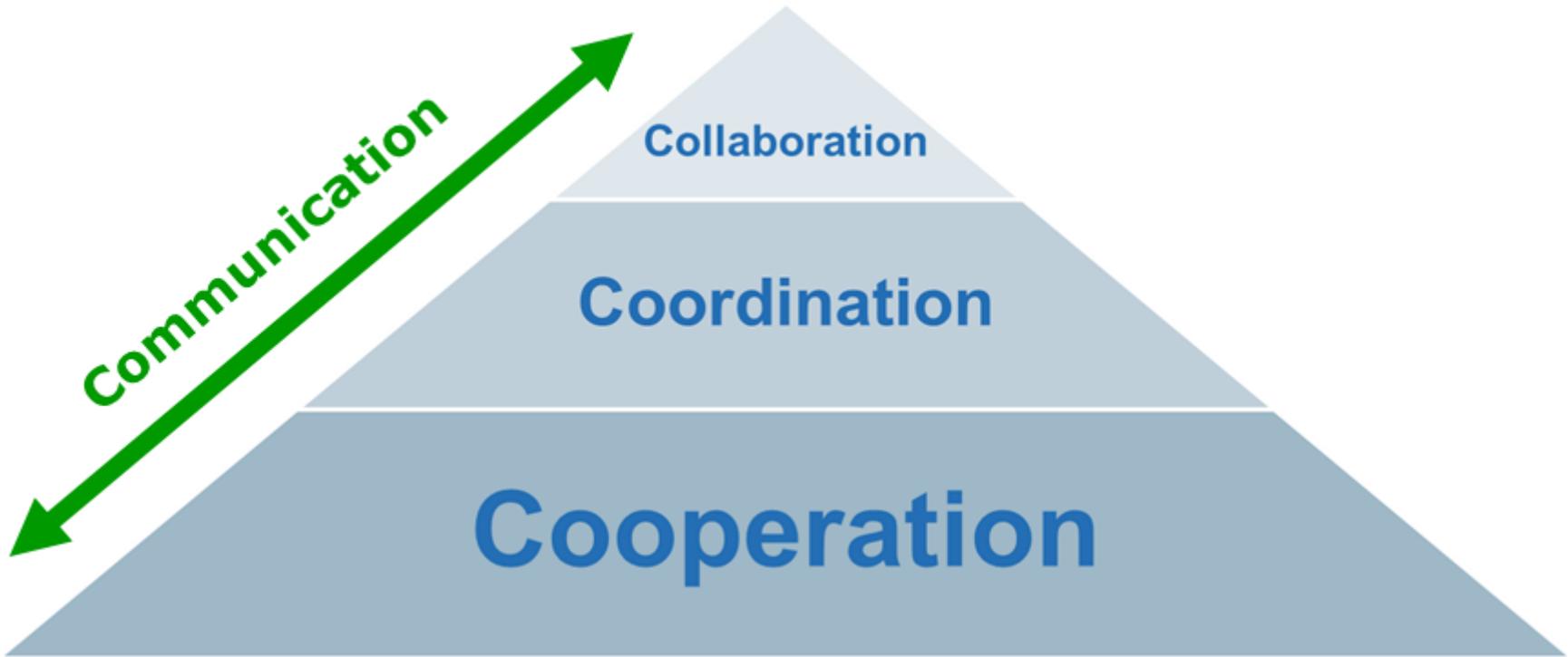
Objectives

- To provide information that will assist potential applicants in pre-application decision making.
- To identify resources for planning, implementing, evaluating and sustaining a partnership.
- To build agency capacity for accessing and utilizing partnership resources.





Collaboration Continuum



This information is adapted from the following: Kagan, S. L. (1991). *United we stand: Collaboration for CC and early education services*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.; Winer, M., & Ray, K. (2003). *Collaboration handbook: Creating, sustaining, and enjoying the journey*. St. Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation. Used with permission. All rights reserved.





Considerations For Partnership

Partners should be recruited and engaged in the process before applying for partnerships funds.



Considerations For Partnership

Community Assessment:

- What are the needs and existing capacity for serving infants and toddlers in your community?
- Where are the potential service areas in your community?
- Are EHS and/or CC programs currently serving eligible children in the service areas?



Considerations For Partnership

Identifying and Selecting a Partner:

- Are providers located in the area of need?
- What kind of structure is in place to support the work of partnering in existing community EHS and CC programs?
- Does the need indicate center based or family CC providers?
- Do the providers in the service areas represent the demographics in that area?

Pre-Planning For the Partnership

Relationship Building

- Discuss common goals and values, and the vision for why partnerships are important.
- It is important that potential partners are actively involved, not just signing letters or memorandums of understanding for the purpose of an application.

Assess capacity of the partnership team

- Do the potential partners have the capacity to serve new and additional children?
- Do the potential partners have support from their boards or leadership teams?



Systems Based Partnerships

Strategies to consider:

- Creating equal partnerships
- Using a neutral consultant (Implementation Planner)
- Engaging relevant stakeholders at the onset of the planning process
- Establishing a vision and parameters for partnership
- Designing a structured planning process that allows room for innovation within the local context

Planning: Principles of Successful Partnerships

- Establishing achievable goals that lead to positive results
- Involving families when developing programs and services
- Including key stakeholders and powerful champions then making their involvement visible to the public
- Designing a governance structures that define partner roles and responsibilities
- Enabling all partners to benefit by drawing on their strengths and contributions
- Working to maintain momentum and sustain work over time



Planning: Develop Common Understanding

- HS and CC programs have distinct systems with different funding and organizational structures, and different regulations. (CC programs seeking to partner with, or become, an EHS program must understand the importance of HS's Program Performance Standards.)
- Both EHS and CC partners need to determine the capacity to partner in local communities, understanding the complexity of both EHS and CC funding mechanisms and implementation of services. (EHS programs partnering with CC program must understand the CC subsidy system, including eligibility and reimbursement.)



Planning: Partnership Agreement/Contracts

Craft a written agreement and revisit it regularly

- The joint crafting of a written agreement enables programs to plan and describe in detail the nature of their collaboration, including management structure, funding, curriculum, transportation, professional development, staff compensation, and data collection and reporting.
- The regular review of the agreement supports programs in evaluating the effectiveness of their plans and agreement, and adapt plans as needed.

Partnership Work Plans

A Partnership Work Plan lays the foundation for developing a clear vision with a focus on the results.

- Agency self assessment supports identifying strengths and challenges within the partnership
- Joint work plan provides an opportunity to develop the infrastructure to support the partnership
- The work plan can ensure a collaborative planning process

Implementing the Vision

Checking in with the partners is key to keeping the vision in focus:

- Why are we partnering?
- How do we ensure seamless service delivery for children and families?
- How do we make regulations work for us, and support the partnership?

Implementing: Strategic Planning

One of the most important elements of the partnership is to develop common goals and understanding.

Strategic planning will assist partners in developing a common mission, vision and action plan for the partnership, including:

- Establishing the framework for the partnership
- Define indicators and performance measures
- Establish a monitoring/accountability system

Implementing: Management Plan

A management plan can be developed to **strategically manage and monitor** the partnership's progress.

The Plan could include:

- The roles and responsibilities of each partner
- Memorandum of Agreements and/or Contracts
- Process and tools for monitoring partnership
- Process for fiscal understanding and accountability for all partners

Implementing: Map Policies & Requirements

- Recruitment, application, and priority/waiting list processes for families are separate and often specific to individual programs and funding streams
- Eligibility requirements may differ depending on whether the child is funded through HS or CCDF.
- Parent co-payments are determined by a sliding fee scale with CCDF, but are often waived or not expected for very-low income families; HS does not require parental fees for services.
- Expectations for parent participation and involvement in HS may not align with CCDF eligibility requirements for approved activities.
- The number of hours a child is allowed to participate is set by the program schedule for HS, and by the parents' work schedule for CC assistance.
- HS grantees are monitored at the Federal level every 3 years for compliance with performance standards. CC programs are monitored for compliance with health and safety standards only at the State level and monitoring frequency varies by state and type of CC program.

Implementing: Fiscal Management Plans

Fiscal management plans:

- Utilize existing resources
- Maximize public revenue/federal revenue
- Generate or create new revenue
- Allocate public revenue in new ways
- Expand private sector finance
- Enlist Public Private partnerships
- Build new partnerships
- Create more flexibility in existing funding streams



Implementing: Decision Making and Negotiation

Effective communication is central to the success of creating, implementing, and sustaining partnerships over time.

- **Decision Making Process:** Effective communication eases the implementation of critical decisions. The more participants in a decision making process understand their role and expectations, the more effective they can be in assisting with and carrying out the decision.
- **Conflict Resolution Plan:** In any partnership or systems change effort conflict will occur at some point in the endeavor. CCDF SA may want to be aware of their role in facilitating and managing conflict when it happens and be prepared to have a conflict resolution plan as one of their tools for effective communication.

Implementing: Communication Plan

Communication Plan: Design a communication system that is responsive to the different kinds of agencies and people in your partnership.

- Identify communication tools
- Identify the communication needs of partners and stakeholders
- Keep all formal communications focused on decisions and actions
- Identify key people in each organization who participate in decision-making
- Set up a system for tracking formal communications
- Determine who will be responsible for monitoring communication

Implementing: Engaging Stakeholders

Engaging diverse stakeholders aids in building ownership and buy-in for improved services and maximize use of available resources. Stakeholders can strengthen the partnership by helping partners to:

- Understand the current landscape - the thinking and attitudes of those you are trying to inform, engage or mobilize;
- Link to a common cause and create a shared vision;
- Set direction for moving forward around a realistic and manageable agenda that recognizes the role of compromise;
- Promote cultural and linguistic competency within the early childhood (EC) learning community.

Sustaining Partnerships

When building and sustaining partnerships:

- Invest time in relationship building and address issues related to trust, turf, and competition
- Educate key stakeholders about services within the partnership, and address questions and concerns
- Form contractual agreements to solidify and formalize relationships
- Address contextual issues (such as budget constraints or pending policy changes) that might impede stakeholders' willingness or ability to commit



Sustaining Partnerships: Evaluation

The evaluation plan serves as a guide for partners, staff, and others in both day-to-day activities and long range planning.

- Evaluation is a strategy to identify, monitor, and track progress of the implementation and expected outcomes of a collaborative project.
- The fundamental principle - evaluation approaches match the purpose and goals of partners and the initiative.
- Set realistic expectations for what can be accomplished - it takes time to build skills among diverse groups of people.

Evaluation plans can be as simple or complex as needed



Challenges Create Opportunities

- How can we create a monitoring and accountability processes across HS and CC to eliminate additional administrative challenges for maintaining partnerships?
- How can we align Federal, State, and local program standards, licensing, and supports to promote partnerships?
- How can we reduce the challenges that surround blending funds and cost allocation in order to improve the quality and accessibility of early care and education for low-income families?
- How can we establish collaborative leadership, engage staff and build relationships with key stakeholders to develop and maintain successful partnerships?



Benefits

- Access to full day, full year high quality care and early education for low income infants and toddlers.
- Continuous comprehensive services, including education, health, mental health, nutrition, family engagement and services to children with disabilities.
- An aligned system of professional development that will ensure a stronger infant and toddler work force.
- Integrating Head Start Program Performance Standards with state and local regulations that support quality.
- Braiding EHS funding with Child Care subsidy and quality funds to support a more dependable source of program income.





Where To Go For More Information and Resources

<https://ChildCareTA.acf.hhs.gov>



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Resource Examples

- A Checklist for Developing a Partnership Agreement or Contract
- Developing a Communication Plan
- Negotiating A Partnership Agreement: Wisdom from the Field
- A Fiscal Management Checklist for Partnerships
- Side-by-Side Comparison of Federal and State Requirements for Early Childhood Education Services
- Sustainability Planning Framework



Are You Planning To Apply?

- **Register with Grants.gov**
 - The registration process can take one to three weeks depending on your organization, so start now!
 - You will receive notifications based on Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
A FON is a number that a federal agency assigns to each specific grant announcement
- **Obtain Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number**
- **Register in System for Award Management (SAM) Eligibility Requirements**
- **Visit: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/register-and-get-ready>**



Email Questions To:

ehs.ccpartnerships@acf.hhs.gov



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THANK YOU



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