



Recruitment Plan 2018-2019

Philosophy:

AVANCE Houston - Head Start views recruitment as a direct correlate to enrollment. Recruitment at AVANCE is an activity that takes place every day of the year. However, each year we identify a specific time to implement a mass recruitment and enrollment plan. Prior to mass enrollment, we take affirmative steps to assure that all persons in Area II (see also definition of Area II), and the City of Houston, as well as the surrounding areas, know that we have a quality program available for those who have the greatest need for services, and that we are “now enrolling” for the upcoming program years.

In the event that we are unable to provide services for any family, we have an active waiting list and a referral process in place to accommodate them.

Responsible Party:

The Sr. Director of ERSEA and Child and Family Support Services and Quality Assurance for Child Care Partnerships (SD) is responsible for ensuring that a successful recruitment plan is in place and properly executed for the agency. The Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance (ERSEA) Specialist (ES) has the direct responsibility for the recruitment and enrollment of children for the Head Start program. Responsibilities are also shared with the Support Service Associates (SSA). However, the greater responsibility is that of the Family Development Workers. Their efforts to follow and execute the plan have the greatest impact on the successfulness of the proposal.

The Organization of Recruitment Efforts

The SD, in collaboration with ES, is also responsible for organizing recruitment efforts. A department calendar is available to document efforts and to schedule activities. The SSAs and the Administrative Assistant all take active roles in supporting this function. In addition and on occasion, program specialists or other designated AVANCE staff will take the lead in organizing recruitment activities that may occur outside of the mass recruitment period.

The ERSEA Committee

An ERSEA Advisory Committee is a standing committee and has been established as a result of regulations and standards set forth by AVANCE-Houston Head Start and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It shall function as another guiding body for not only recruitment efforts, but for the entire ERSEA experience. Persons serving on this committee provide input to develop the ERSEA plans - particularly for recruitment and selection for the upcoming program year, provide suggestions for a more efficient process, and offer new ideas to better capture our target audience.

The Committee operates in two factions – the ERSEA “Working” Committee (a sub-committee) and the ERSEA “Advisory” Committee (the group in its entirety).

The “Working” Committee meets prior to the “Advisory” Committee. They conduct research and make recommendations in order to expedite activities for the group at-large. As a small group they are easier to manage as far as time constraints and other responsibilities, they are able to meet for smaller periods of time and most importantly, they are capable of making quick decisions. The individuals in this sub-committee are constituents of both the Working Committee and Advisory Committee.

The “Working” Committee will consist of the SD, the ES, the SSAs, at least one FDW team leader, and an Early Head Start Representative. Additionally, there must be at least one representative from the Independent School District collaboration.

The ERSEA “Advisory” Committee will include, in addition to the Working Committee members, one parent, all content area specialists, the Database Coordinator, and Assistant Directors, as deemed necessary; and any partner participating in the summer screenings (i.e. Young Learners and Chamberlain College). This group will be responsible for reviewing and approving the recommendations made by the Working Committee. They will also offer additional suggestions and recommendations.

Monitoring and Inquiries

All families that inquire about Head Start are placed on an inquiry list that is maintained by Center Staff and monitored by the Support Service Associates (SSAs). This database can be found in AVANCE’s global directory. It currently includes the parents’ name(s) and the name of the enrolling child, the family’s living address, zip code, telephone number and the child’s date of birth. When available, at least one email address may be documented, as well. The database also includes a check box to indicate whether or not a child has a current IEP. The inquiries are assigned to the appropriate Family Development Worker (FDW), who will contact the family by phone to conduct a pre-screening and to schedule an enrollment interview, if appropriate.

Goals:

- To conduct recruitment activities throughout the entire service area. Special attention may be placed near or around centers, or zip codes which have been identified as areas of concern*, areas that may have had difficulty maintaining their funded enrollment and/or have minimal waiting/inquiry lists or where there are areas of other great needs.
- To conduct recruitment activities that pay special attention to vulnerable participants, including homeless children, foster children, children with disabilities and pregnant women.
- To actively inform all families with Head Start eligible children within Area II of the availability of services and encourage them to apply for admission to the program
- To conduct recruitment activities that will result in the enrollment of a minimum of 10% of children with disabilities.
- To obtain a greater number of applications during the recruitment process that occurs prior to the beginning of mass enrollment, than the enrollment opportunities that are anticipated to be available over the course of the next enrollment year. The target for the 2018-2019 program years is a minimum of 760 applications, of which 560 should be completed by May 15, 2018 and the remaining 200 applications by August 13, 2018 for Head Start; and 137 for Early Head Start, also by May 15, 2018. There will be a target of 20 applications for our child care partnerships, due by June 21, 2018. Please note – the number of required applications may change.

Actions required to attain goals:

Contact Local Community Service Agencies

- During the month of February, FDWs will submit lists of local community service agencies/businesses/service providers, primarily located within Area II, that provide services to families that may meet the Head Start eligibility criteria.
- Contact will be made to agencies that provide services to or may have knowledge of potential participants that are most vulnerable.
- FDWs are placed into competitive recruitment teams, where the individual lists are shared and a team recruitment calendar is developed. A team captain is elected and acts as the liaison between the ES and/or the SD and the team.
- Teams will visit each entity to provide them with recruitment paraphernalia, including, but not limited to fliers, posters, brochures, etc.

Recruit For/Within Current Early Head Start Classrooms

- All children who are age 30-months and are currently enrolled in Early Head Start shall begin transition into a Head Start classroom.
- Early Head Start will provide the ES with a list of children who are eligible to transition into the Head Start program. These names will be distributed to the appropriate FDW, who will schedule a meeting with each parent, recruit for Head Start, and conduct an enrollment interview, when appropriate.
- All applications shall be completed so that eligible children are able to transition into Head Start as soon as possible.
- FDWs will distribute EHS recruitment paraphernalia within the appropriate zip codes during the mass enrollment period, in efforts to fill EHS program vacancies.
- EHS staff will participate in these recruitment activities whenever possible.

Recruit Children with Disabilities

- Children with disabilities will be recruited and referred from EHS, school districts, and ECI programs.
- The SD, ES, SSAs and Intervention Specialists will work together to ensure that all inquiries and/or referrals of children with disabilities are disseminated to the appropriate FDW and Intervention Support staff to determine if the child is eligible for the Head Start program.
- Recruitment paraphernalia, specific to children with disabilities/IEPs, will be distributed to any agency providing services to children with disabilities within the service area, as well as to designated service agencies outside the AVANCE service area.
- Each recruitment team member will identify at least 3 service agencies that provide services to children with disabilities to display recruitment paraphernalia.
- ECI Recruitment will occur throughout the program year by way of meeting attendance and program presentations.
- Additional Recruitment Information may be found by referencing the following Procedures –
A. Recruitment of infants and toddlers with disabilities. B. Recruitment of Children of Disabilities. C. Identify Target Populations of Children with disabilities.

Recruit Within Houston Housing Apartments

- In areas where AVANCE has established partnerships with the Houston Housing Authority to provide services (Oxford Place & Lincoln Park), AVANCE will conduct recruitment and enrollment activities for the residents at that location prior to conducting recruitment activities in the surrounding areas.
- Information is disseminated throughout the Houston's Housing Apartments within the AVANCE service area.

Participation in Community Events

- AVANCE will participate in community events throughout the program year that are focused on children and families. Brochures, fliers, and other recruitment items will be utilized at these events. A professional presentation board will be created and updated, as needed, by the AVANCE Staff and will be available at all events. This presentation board is not a tool that is only used at events and stored away in a closet between uses. It (or a smaller version) will be placed in area churches, civic facilities, schools, and private businesses, etc. when not being used as a part of community events to increase program awareness.
- These activities, as with all recruitment activities, will occur throughout the program year, and as deemed necessary and appropriate.

Standardization of Recruitment Materials in all AVANCE Centers

- The goal is to have enrollment information and application packets available at all AVANCE sites. The center's assigned FDW will be the keeper of the enrollment applications and other information should be located in a place accessible to potential participants. However, the Dacoma office staff will also be prepared to provide immediate information, and possible enrollment interviews, to persons who walk in. We want to avoid asking a person to go elsewhere for assistance or information.
- We request that families sign-in on the inquiry list when they are interested in the Head Start program. They should include their name, address, telephone number, and the child's date of birth along with any other pertinent information. In turn, the FDW will make contact with the family to begin the enrollment process.
- All current and approved recruitment and enrollment information will be disseminated from the Dacoma office and/or the ERSEA Staff. Only this material may be used for AVANCE's ERSEA purposes. In specific instances, materials may be developed by the AVANCE Marketing department.

Community Partners

- Information will be disseminated to our community partners to inform the partners about the services offered by AVANCE and the upcoming ERSEA and program activities.

Door-to-Door

- The current community assessment will be used as an instrument to determine the specific areas, if any, to be included in door-to-door recruitment.

- Doorknockers/Hang tags will be available to all persons attempting contact via the door-to-door activity. Doorknockers will be placed on the doorknob with the agency's name, address, and telephone number. It will advise the family to contact us, if they are interested.

Agency Vehicles

- AVANCE vehicles are currently being used as mobile advertisement. The AVANCE name is prominently displayed on all vehicles. All vehicles will be provided with brochures and/or fliers for distribution, as requested.

Contact Local Churches

- Select churches within the area will be contacted and informed of our recruitment and enrollment efforts.

Parental Involvement

- AVANCE Head Start parents are instrumental in referring other eligible families to the program. Head Start brochures and various recruitment paraphernalia will be made available to them to support this effort.

Partner with Child Care Facilities and School Districts

- The SD or ES, along with the assigned Family Development Worker(s), whenever possible, will meet with each partnering childcare facility's director and school's principal, registrar, and any other staff deemed necessary, prior to conducting any recruitment/enrollment activities. In the event that a meeting is not feasible, an enrollment packet containing an enrollment calendar, recruitment plan, and other pertinent enrollment information will be provided to the school staff.

Sibling Sign-Up

- Center staff will provide special notices (posters strategically placed at the centers, reminder cards, and/or special fliers) to the parents/guardians of current Head Start children who have siblings that may be eligible for the program. Time will be allotted during the first week of February for those families to speak with FDWs, ask questions, and sign-up for a pre-screening.

Policy Council Involvement

- The recruitment plan is an essential piece of the ERSEA manual. The Policy Council shall be involved in the creation of the manual and has authority to approve or disapprove this plan. The recruitment plan will be presented to the Policy Council and/or Policy Committee during the January meeting of each year, as well as to the Board of Directors. Any critical changes that result in the need for an addendum to this plan, after it has been approved, will be presented to the Council for approval before inclusion.

Web Presence

- The Marketing department will maintain the agency website. Recruitment and enrollment efforts will be noted on the site.
- AVANCE will provide the option of submitting inquiries via the web page.

Inquiry Line

- As an additional tool, AVANCE offers potential participants the opportunity to inquire about Head Start, as well as other agency programs 24 hours a day, via the phone line.
- Inquirers leave messages on a designated extension and calls are returned by appropriate staff.

Marketing/Media Spots

- If deemed necessary, radio spots, newspaper advertisements, public service announcements, or other media outlets may be used in efforts to promote program opportunities and awareness.

Application Targets

- All Family Development Workers will receive application targets from the ES no later than the first week of March. This will include the minimum number of applications to be obtained for each center, per worker.

Training

- All FDWs will receive training prior to the Mass Recruitment and Mass Enrollment processes.
 - The training will begin in February, 2018 and the final training held May, 2018.
 - Trainings will consist of ERSEA I, II & III.

NOTE:

- All recruitment participants will prominently display agency identification cards.
- No staff will ever conduct recruitment activities in isolation.
- *Areas of concern (those areas populated with vulnerable or at risk participants) will be identified after reviewing the Community Assessment.