

*Community Services Bureau/ **HEAD START***

Who is eligible for Head Start?

There are three different ways to look at eligibility for the Head Start program. They are:

1. Age eligibility: Children who are between birth and five years of age, and are not yet old enough to go to Kindergarten, are age eligible for our program.
2. Income eligibility: We have three different income guidelines we follow for all of our programs, which are all based on family size:
 - [Head Start/Early Head Start Guidelines](#)
 - State Preschool Guidelines
 - State Child Development Guidelines
3. Need eligibility: If you are applying for our full-day, full-year program, parents need to be working, in school or training, or incapacitated. Documentation is required for all need requirements.

There is also a requirement that 10% of enrollments should be offered to children with disabilities.

Community-based organizations who work with families who can benefit from the Head Start program can make a referral by completing and printing the [form CSD 620](#) and sending it to the program as instructed at the top of the document.

Enrolling in Head Start

To apply for our program, you can do any one of the following:

1. Call (925) 313-1551 to find the location of a center near you. The center Site Supervisor or Family Advocate there will determine eligibility and assist with enrollment.
2. Call our enrollment hotline numbers:
 - East/Central County: (925) 427-8852
 - West County: (510) 374-7144
3. Fill out and print the Pre-Application Screening form and send it to our program as instructed at the top of the form ([English](#) / [Spanish](#)).

No Cost for Head Start Program

The comprehensive Head Start program is completely free to income-qualified families.

Duration of the Program

All programs are full year (12 months).

Hours of the Program

Part day is 8 AM-12N or 1-5 PM. Full day for families who are working or attending job training is full day 6:30 AM to 6 PM, with hours based on time needed, but must need at least six hours a day, five days a week, M-F.

Head Start Curriculum

The program's curriculum, environment (indoor and outdoor), choice and implementation of activities, and child guidance strategies are designed to maximize opportunities for each child to develop social and cultural competence.

Early Head Start

The Early Head Start program serves low-income pregnant women and families with infants and toddlers from birth to age 3. The Early Head Start program was established in 1994 by the Head Start Reauthorization Act. Early Head Start programs are operated under grants awarded by the federal government.

Home-Based Head Start

Home-Based Start is a home-based model for providing Head Start services to children and their families in collaboration with exempt providers in Contra Costa County. Exempt providers are family child care providers who are exempt from having a license, because they care for only one family's children besides their own. They provide child care services to parents who are in transition from welfare to the general work force. Usually, Exempt Providers are relatives or friends. The program builds bridges for the Exempt Providers and families to link them to the local community and resources.

There is no difference in the Head Start program whether it be provided at a Head Start Center or in the home as all services provided to the home-visited family are the same quality as those given in centers. The only difference is the home setting, which is used as the learning environment, and the parent is the primary educator. The home visitor role is to be the facilitator. For Early Head Start, the parent-child bonding and attachment is one of the most important home visitation goals.