2013 VERMONT
HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START
NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

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Vermont Head Start
State Collaboration Office
(VHSSCO)

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2013 Vermont Head Start and Early Head Start Needs Assessment Report

Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office

Executive Summary

Under the Head Start Act, the Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office (VHSSCO) is required to conduct and update annually a needs assessment of Head Start and Early Head Start grantees in the State of Vermont in the areas of coordination, collaboration, and alignment of services, curricula, assessments, and standards used in Head Start grantees, such as aligning the *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework* with the *Vermont Early Learning Standards* (VELS). The VHSSCO uses the findings to regularly inform the implementation of its Five-Year (2012-2017) Strategic Plan. The VHSSCO submitted its third-year work plan on June 30, 2014, and the federal Region I -- OHS approved it on August 19, 2014.

This needs assessment report used information from web-survey data collected from Head Start and Early Head Start grantees during March 5 – June 17, 2013. Eight of 11 OHS Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) Priority Areas were in the survey. They are:

- Child Care,
- Education (School Readiness, Head Start – Pre-K Partnership Development, and Partnerships with Local Education Agencies),
- School Transitions and Alignment with Kindergarten through Grade 12,
- Services for Children with Disabilities,
- Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness,
- Professional Development,
- Early Childhood Systems, and
- Community Services: Services for Military Families.

In reviewing the data, the VHSSCO identified strengths throughout most of the Priority Areas but especially in Child Care, Education, Services for Children with Disabilities, Early Childhood Systems, and School Transitions. Analysis of the data reveals a pattern in which Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantees reported higher proportions of Collaboration Needs in their *Extent of Involvement* with organizations/service providers in the Child Care, School Transitions from Head Start to Kindergarten, Services for Children with Disabilities, Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness, Professional Development, and Early Childhood Systems than they did with engaging in activities in these six priority areas. HSSCO

Priority Areas. Where Collaboration Needs are identified, the VHSSCO will consider ways to strengthen collaboration among Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and their partners in the implementation of its Five-Year (2007-2012) Strategic Plan.

Detailed charts with narratives related to each of the eight HSSCO Priority Areas form the body of this report and a brief summary of strengths and needs in each Priority Area is noted below:

- **Child Care:** Head Start and Early Head Start grantees reported 54 percent more Collaboration Strengths than Collaboration Needs. Strengths included high Head Start and Early Head Start involvement with the Child Development Division and committees of the Building Bright Futures (BBF) State Advisory Council, Inc. or Building Bright Futures (BBF) Regional Councils that address child care issues and high Head Start and Early Head Start engagement in activities, such as assisting families to access full-day, full-year services and getting involved with state-level planning and policy development for Child Care and Development Block Grant. One need was for Head Start and Early Head Start grantees to engage in activities to coordinate child care subsidy certificates based on service need (e.g. employment, training/education, Reach Up, special health needs of parent).
- **Education (School Readiness, Head Start – Pre-K Partnership Development, and Partnerships with Local Education Agencies):** Overall, this priority area was a Collaboration Strength. During 2012-2013 program year, six of seven Head Start grantees reported that they had a partnership agreement with a Local Education Agency (LEA) responsible for managing a publicly funded pre-k program. There were 100 percent more strengths than needs regarding the ability of Head Start grantees through their agreements with LEAs to engage in school readiness activities with public funded pre-k programs.
- **School Transitions and Alignment with Kindergarten through Grade 12:** This priority area had 39 percent more strengths than needs. Strengths included high Head Start involvement with LEAs regarding the transitioning of children from Head Start to kindergarten and putting into practice various school transitions activities to support successful transitions for Head Start children entering kindergarten. Needs concerned difficulties working with LEAs on policies and procedures that support children's transition to school and on joint transition-related training.
- **Services for Children with Disabilities:** There were 17 percent more strengths than needs. Most Head Start grantees and all Early Head Start grantees reported strengths in meeting their core service delivery responsibilities to support preschool-aged children with disabilities in Head Start and children from birth to age three with disabilities in Early Head Start in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Needs

included low Head Start involvement with the Interagency Coordinating Council and university/community college programs.

- **Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness:** This area needs improvement because Head Start grantees reported 33 percent more needs than strengths. The needs included the low levels of involvement between Head Start grantees and local McKinney-Vento homelessness liaisons and school district Title I directors and for most Head Start grantees to engage with LEAs in the implementation of transition planning and family outreach and support efforts under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. On the other hand, the strengths were high Head Start engagement in the collection of sufficient data on the needs of homeless children and the implementation of school transitions policies and procedures to ensure that children experiencing homelessness needs are prioritized.
- **Professional Development:** There were 11 percent more needs than strengths. Needs concerned low Head Start and Early Head Start involvement with institutions of higher education, the Head Start-funded national T/TA centers, state-level Children's Integrated Services (CIS), local Reach Up offices, and LEA-offered school transitions and school readiness trainings. Strengths included high Head Start and Early Head Start engagement with professional development activities and services provided by the Child Development Division, the Northern Lights Career Development Center, the Agency of Education, and the Head Start state-based Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) System.
  Early Childhood Systems: Head Start and Early Head Start grantees reported 58 percent more strengths than needs. Strengths included low difficulties for Head Start and Early Head Start grantees to engage in early childhood systems activities and to have high levels of involvement with BBF Regional Councils, STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS is Vermont's TQRIS), statewide efforts to unify early childhood data systems, and CIS intake coordinators and Individual Child/Family Teams. Needs were low involvement with the State Advisory Council, Inc. and with CIS Intake , Early Childhood Consultation, and Administrative Teams.
- **Community Services – Services for Military Families:** This area needs improvement. There were no strengths. The needs were the low Head Start and Early Head Start involvement with organizations serving military families and the difficulties of Head Start and Early Head Start grantees to engage in activities for military families.

The VHSSCO will share the results of this report publicly and with stakeholders. Through this process, the collaboration, coordination, and alignment of services, curricula, standards, and/or assessments between Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and their partners will be strengthened for the benefit of young children and their families in Vermont.

Acknowledgements

The 2013 Vermont Head Start and Early Head Start Needs Assessment Report is the product of a yearlong project that involved the efforts of a number of individuals. The Vermont Head Start-State Collaboration Office thanks the Vermont Head Start Association members for its support and participation in the needs assessment project. Thank you to Sheri Lynn of Lynn Management Consulting for developing the 2013 Head Start and Early Head Start Needs Assessment web survey and for collecting, categorizing, and summarizing the survey responses for the 2012-2013 program year.

We also thank the Head Start and Early Head Start program directors and their staff for completing the web survey, the primary data collection tool used to produce this report. A complete list of these programs is included in Appendix A. The directors and their staff provided valuable input from start to finish. We also appreciate the support provided by the Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families, Agency of Human Services, State of Vermont to review and post the report online.

Overview of Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office

The Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office (VHSSCO) is part of a network of state, territorial, and national offices. Each of the 50 States, District of Columbia and Puerto Rico has a Head Start-State Collaboration Office. The National Collaboration Offices are the Head Start State and National Collaboration Offices (HSSNCO), the American Indian/Alaskan Native Head Start Collaboration Office (AIANHSCO) and the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Collaboration Office (MSHSCO). Each of the State and national offices receive federal grant funds from the federal Office of Head Start (OHS), Administration for Children in Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The OHS has awarded the State of Vermont a five-year federal Head Start-State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) grant. The grant is "…to facilitate collaboration among Head Start agencies, including Early Head Start agencies, and entities that carry out activities designed to benefit low income children from birth to school entry, and their families,"[1] (Office of Head Start, 2014b, http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/states/collaboration/hssco-framework.html).

The VHSSCO uses the following methods to coordinate and lead efforts for diverse entities to work together:

- Communication: Convene stakeholder groups for information sharing and planning and act as a liaison between the federal Regional Office – OHS and the State and local early childhood system.
- Access: Facilitate Head Start agencies' access and partnerships with other organizations so Head Start children and families can secure needed services.
- Systems: Support policy, planning, and implementation of cross agency State systems for early childhood, including the State Advisory Council (SAC) that include and serve the Head Start community. Vermont's SAC is the Building Bright Futures (BBF) State Advisory Council, Inc. (Office of Head Start, 2014b, http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/states/collaboration/hssco-framework.html).

As charged by the OHS, the VHSSCO facilitates collaboration among Head Start agencies and State and local partners by:

- Assisting in building early childhood systems;
- Providing access to comprehensive services and support for all low-income children;

[1] Head Start Act Section 642B(a)(2)(A).

- Encouraging widespread collaboration between Head Start and other appropriate programs, services, and initiatives;
- Augmenting Head Start's capacity to be a partner in state initiatives on behalf of children and their families; and
- Facilitating the involvement of Head Start in state policies, plans, processes, and decisions that affect target populations and other low-income families. (Office of Head Start, 2014a, http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/states/collaboration/about.html).

The VHSSCO works with the federal Regional OHS in Boston, Massachusetts covering the New England states and the federal OHS in Washington, District of Columbia. The Head Start State and National Collaboration Offices Framework charges the VHSSCO to address the following four goal areas in the VHSSCO's current Five-Year (2012-2017) Strategic Plan:

1. **School Transitions**: The VHSSCO works to foster seamless transitions and the long-term success of Head Start children by promoting continuity of services and aligning the Head Start Child Development and Learning Framework with the Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS). Furthermore, the VHSSCO includes the Teaching Strategies (TS) Gold development assessment used by all Head Start programs and state-funded pre-k programs, Vermont's Kindergarten Readiness Survey (KRS) completed by kindergarten teachers, and making TS Gold and KRS data interoperable with the Vermont Agency of Education's Kindergarten through Grade 12 State Longitudinal Data Systems in its school transitions work.

2. **Professional Development**: The VHSSCO collaborates with institutions of higher education (IHE) to promote professional development through education and credentialing programs for early childhood providers in States. The VHSSCO works with many state partners involved with the state professional development system (e.g., the BBF State Advisory Council, Inc.'s Professional Preparation and Development Committee, the Northern Lights Career Development Center, the Agency of Education and the Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families, Agency of Human Services).

3. **Child Care and Early Childhood Systems**: The VHSSCO coordinates its activities with the Child Development Division that is responsible for administrating Vermont's Child Care and Development Block Grant and making grants to child care resource and referral service agencies. The purpose of coordinating activities is to make full-working day and full--calendar -year services more accessible to young children. The VHSSCO supports the continued integration of the *Head Start Program Performance Standards and Other Regulations* in Vermont's STARS (Step Ahead Recognition System), participation

by Head Start programs in STARS, and Head Start partnerships with child care programs and early childhood systems locally.

4. **Regional Office Priorities**: The VHSSCO supports other Regional Office priorities such as family and community partnerships; health, mental health, and oral health; disabilities; and support to military families.

Under the Head Start Act, the Head Start State Collaboration Offices (HSSCOs) are required to update annually, a statewide needs assessment. This 2012-2013 assessment report covering the 2012-2013 Head Start and Early Head Start program year identifies the strengths and opportunities for Head Start and Early Head Start grantees to collaborate, coordinate and align services and programming of State and local entities and to align curricula and assessments used by Head Start and Early Head Start grantees with the *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework* and the *Vermont Early Learning Standards* (VELS).[2] Because the VHSSCO must use its needs assessment findings to inform the development of its annual work plans, the needs assessment results in this report informed the development of the VHSSCO's Third Year (September 30, 2014 -- September 29, 2015) Work Plan of the VHSSCO Five-Year (2012-2017) Strategic Plan.

[2] Head Start Act, Section 642B(a)(3)(C)(i).

Head Start and Early Head Start in Vermont

Introduction

The Head Start Program's goal is to promote the school readiness of children from low-income families, who are three- and four-year-olds and five-year-olds not age-eligible for kindergarten, by supporting their growth in language, literacy, math, science, social and emotional functioning, creative arts, physical skills, and approaches to learning. To achieve this goal, Head Start provides a comprehensive range of education, child development, health, nutrition, and family support services to Head Start enrolled children and their families. The Early Head Start Program serves pregnant women, infants, and toddlers under the age of three and provides comprehensive child development and family support services to them.

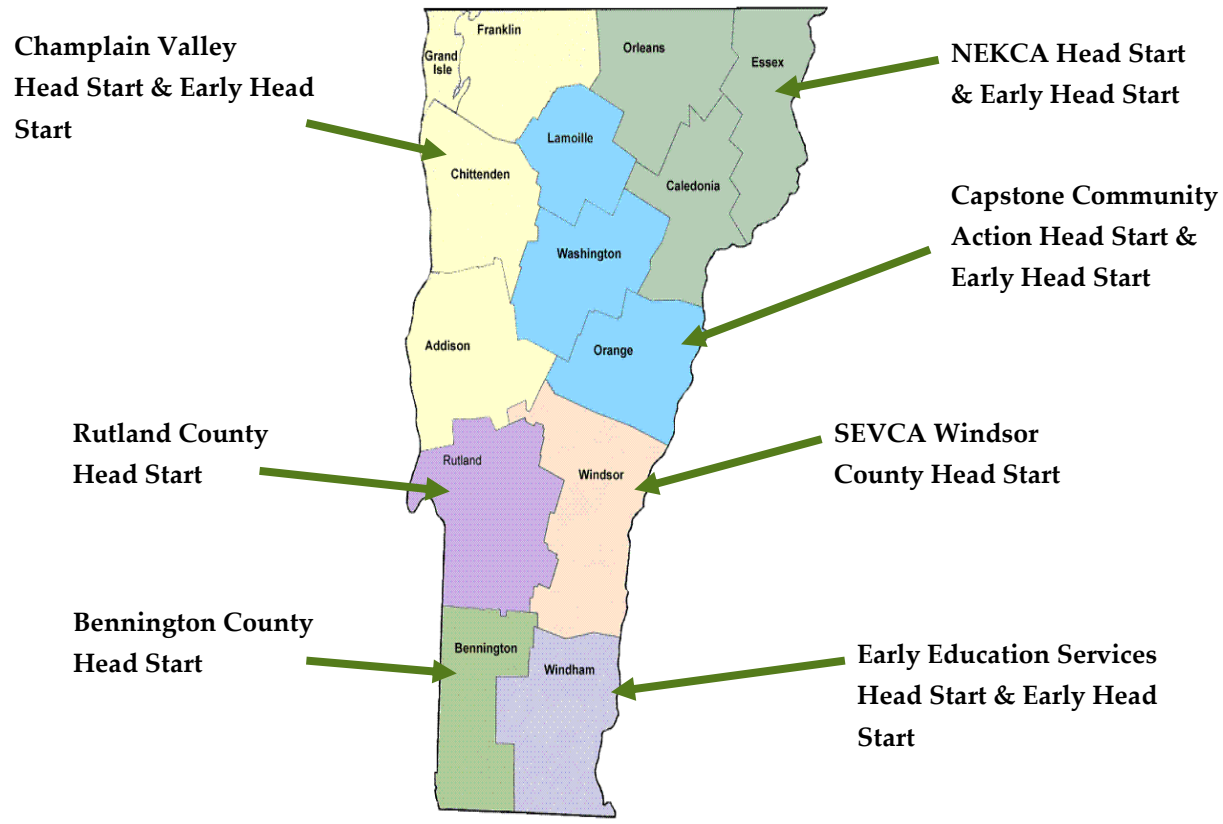
Administration of Head Start/Early Head Start

The federal government, not the States, oversees the operations of and provides the bulk of funding directly to Head Start programs. Under the Head Start Act, local public organizations, private non-profit agencies, and for-profit entities are eligible to receive federal grant funds and be a Head Start or Early Head Start grantee/provider. A local Head Start or Early Head Start program receives a five-year federal grant for 80 percent of its funding from OHS and must raise a 20 percent match of their total program's funding from non-federal contributions. The federal government allows Head Start/Early Head Start programs to use private, local, municipal, and State funding sources as part of their 20 percent match. The size of a program's federal grant is unaffected even if a program's non-federal match is greater than 20 percent

In Vermont, seven community-based organizations receive federal grants from OHS, to operate seven Head Start programs (see Figure 1). Four of these organizations also receive federal grants from OHS to operate the four Early Head Start programs in Vermont. The types of organizations administering the programs are:

- Community Action Agency for Head Start and Early Head Start: Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity, Capstone Community Action, Northeast Kingdom Community Action,
- Community Action Agency for Head Start: Southeast Vermont Community Action,
- Mental Health Agency for Head Start: Rutland Mental Health Services-Community Care Network and United Children's Service, and
- School District for Head Start and Early Head Start: Brattleboro School District/Early Education Services.

Figure 1: Service Areas of Vermont's Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees



Program Options

Based upon their respective community needs assessments, Head Start and Early Head Start grantees offer young children and their families program options to meet their individual needs. The program options vary among the Head Start and Early Head Start grantees because individual grantees consider their community needs assessment data and choose which program options to provide to tailor their programming and services to meet the needs of young children and families in their service areas (see Figure 1 and Appendix A).[3] It is important for State, regional, and community partners to know the different Head Start and Early Head Start program options because the staffing and resource needs vary according by program option.

[3] Figure 1 displays the geographic areas covered by each Head Start/Early Head Start grantee, and Appendix A contains the list of the towns served by Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantees in that region.

One or more of seven Head Start grantees in Vermont during the 2012-2013 program year, offered the following program options:

- Center-based full day (at least six half hours daily) for five days per week;
- Center-based full-working-day (at least 10 hours daily) for five days per week;
- Center-based full-working-day (at least 10 hours daily) for five days per week for the full-year;
- Center-based part-day (three and a half to six hours daily) for five days per week;
- Center-based full-day (at least six hours daily) for four days per week;
- Center-based part-day (three and a half to six hours daily) for four days per week;
- Home-based with one visit per week in a family's home for at least 32 home visits annually and with a minimum of 16 group socialization activities annually;
- Combination of services provided to children and their families in both a center setting and through intensive work with the child's parents and family in their home;
- Family child care option; and/or
- Family child care full-working-day (at least 10 hours daily), full-year.

In contrast with the standard OHS' definition of full-year services to be at least 48 weeks annually, the OHS lacks one for "full-year" Head Start services. The number of weeks that Head Start services are provided varies by grantee according to conditions of their grant award.

During the same year, one or more of four Early Head Start grantees in Vermont offered the following program options for at least 48 weeks annually:

- Center-based full day (at least six half hours daily) for five days per week;
- Center-based full-working-day for (at least 10 hours daily) five days per week; and/or
- Home-based with one visit per week in a family's home for at least 32 home visits annually and with a minimum of 16 group socialization activities annually.

After the application, eligibility and enrollment processes are completed, families choose to enroll their children in available Head Start/Early Head Start program options.

State and Local Partnerships

The VHSSCO supports the efforts of Head Start and Early Head Start grantees to partner effectively with State, regional, and local organizations so that young children and their families can benefit. For example, Head Start and Early Head Start grantees partner with State, regional, and local organizations to provide services to children disabilities in Vermont. Children's Integrated Services (CIS) determines whether a child from birth to age three enrolled in Early Head Start is eligible for special education and Early Intervention services under Part C of the

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). There are 12 CIS regional programs which conduct an evaluation to determine a child's eligibility for Part C services. If CIS determines that the child is eligible, then a team, which should include Early Head Start staff and the child's family, are to develop and implement an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)/One Plan for the child and their family. It is the responsibility of the regional CIS/Early Intervention program to notify the appropriate LEA and the CIS central office if there is a child receiving Part C services whether that child is potentially eligible for Part B, Section 619 special education services under IDEA.

Preschool age children in Head Start have access to a similar process with the Local Educational Agency (LEA). After Head Start staff refers a child who may have a development delay to the appropriate LEA, it is the LEA's responsibility to evaluate and determine whether that child has a developmental delay or medical condition making the child eligible for special education. The local school district's Evaluation Planning Team (EPT) determines whether a preschool-age child is eligible to receive Part B, Section 619 special education services, and the EPT bases its decision on the evaluation results and Vermont's Special Education Rules criteria for children ages 3 up to 6. If a Head Start child is determined to be eligible for special education services, then a team, which should include a Head Start representative creates and develops an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) (Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families, Department of Education, Vermont Head Start Association, CIS, and Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office, 2012).

Head Start and Early Enrollment and Funding During the 2012-2013 Program Year

According to the Head Start Program Information Report for the 2012-2013 program year, the total funded enrollment of the seven Head Start programs and the four Early Head Start programs were 1,196 slots and 375 slots, respectively. Of the 1,196 Head Start slots, 1,187 slots were ACF-funded and nine slots were non-ACF funded.

Near the end of the 2012-2013 Program Year, the federal OHS announced on April 26, 2013 that all Head Start and Early Head Start programs would receive a 5.27 percent cut on their Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2013 grants to operate their programs (Office of Head Start, 2013b, https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/ PIs/2013/resour_pri_003_042613.html). This cut reduced the base grant amounts of Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Vermont by $800,000 from $15.1 million to $14.3 million during FFY 2013. Because of this cut, the OHS reported in August 2013 that an estimated 233 young children and their families would no longer receive Head Start and Early Head Start services (Miller, 2014, http://www2.leg.state.vt.us/CommitteeDocs/House%20Ways%20and%20Means/Impact%20of%20Federal

%20Cuts%20in%20Headstart/1-10-2014~Marianne%20Miller~Testimony%20to%20the%20Vermont%20House%20Ways%20and%20Means%20Committee%20January%2010,%202014.pdf. The VHSSCO estimated that 55 percent of these children were receiving Head Start/Early Head Start services through partnerships between Head Start/Early Head Start programs and community early care and education programs (Allen, 2014, http://www2.leg.state.vt.us/CommitteeDocs/House%20Ways%20and%20Means/Impact%20of%20Federal%20Cuts%20in%20Headstart/1-10-2014~Reeva%20Murphy~Impact%20of%20Federal%20Sequestration%20on%20Head%20Start%20Programs%20in%20Vermont%20January%202014.pdf. Sequestration had a short-term negative impact on collaborations and partnerships between Head Start programs and their community partners.

Fortunately, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 restored to Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Vermont the federal funds that were cut through sequestration and provided a 1.3 percent cost-of-living increase (Office of Head Start, 2014c, http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/pi/2014/resour_pri_001_021014.html). The total Federal Fiscal Year 2014 base grant amount of Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Vermont is $15.2 million. The total ACF-funded enrollment of the seven Head Start programs and the four Early Head Start programs is 1,093 slots and 365 slots, respectively.[4] The restoration of funding provided resources for Head Start and Early Head Start programs to increase their partnerships and collaborations with their community partners.

[4] The federal OHS Region I Office supplied the VHSSCO with the funding and slot figures on July 10, 2014.

Needs Assessment Process

The 2012-2013 needs assessment process consisted of drafting a web survey of Head Start and Early Head Start grantees in consultation with the Head Start and Early Head Start program directors, fielding the survey, and determining a methodology to analyze and describe the survey findings. This section of the report describes the survey questionnaire's timing and topical content; types of survey questions; and methodology selected to analyze and patterns of collaboration from the survey findings.

Timing and Topical Content of Needs Assessment Survey

From March 5 – June 17, 2013, the VHSSCO surveyed directors of Head Start and Early Head Start grantees using the web-based SurveyMonkey® software so they could complete the needs assessment survey online. The 2012-2013 survey questions covered eight of the 11 HSSCO Priority Areas. Figure 2 compares which HSSCO Priority Areas were covered by

Figure 2: OHS HSSCO Priority Areas Covered by Annual VHSSCO Web Surveys

OHS HSSCO Priority Areas Addressed in the Annual VHSSCO Web Surveys to Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees	Program Year 2011-2012	Program Year 2012-2013
1. Health Care Services	✓	
2. Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness	✓	✓
3. Welfare/Child Welfare	✓	
4. Child Care	✓	✓
5. Family Literacy Services	✓	
6. Services for Children with Disabilities	✓	✓
7. Community Services	✓	✓
8. Education (School Readiness, Head Start – Pre-K Partnership Development, and Partnerships with Local Education Agencies)	✓	✓
9. School Transitions and Alignment with K-12	✓	✓
10. Professional Development	✓	✓
11. Early Childhood Systems	✓	✓

the 2012-2013 and 2011-2012 web surveys. The 2012-2013 VHSSCO web survey did not cover all 11 areas because OHS recommends assessing all 11 HSSCO Priority Areas at least once every five years and the 2011-2012 VHSSCO web survey did that by assessing all 11 Priority Areas during the 2011-2012 program year.

The 11 HSSCO Priority Areas are consistent with the four goal areas of the VHSSCO Five-Year Strategic Plan (2012-2017) and the OHS' *Head Start State and National Collaboration Offices Framework*'s four priorities: School Transitions; Professional Development; Child Care and Early Childhood Systems; and Regional Office Priorities (Office of Head Start, 2014b, https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/states/collaboration/hssco-framework.html).

The 2013 web survey posed questions to Head Start and Early Head Start grantees about the extent of collaboration between their programs and State, regional, and/or local organizations regarding:

A. Child Care;

B. Education (School Readiness: Memorandum of Understandings and Partnerships between Head Start and LEAs Providing State-Funded Pre-K Programs);

C. Transitions (School Transitions between Head Start and Kindergarten, Alignment of Head Start with Kindergarten – Grade 12 Education, Transitions of Services for Preschool-Aged Children with Disabilities between Head Start and Schools/School Districts/Supervisory Unions; and Transitions of Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness between Head Start and Schools/School Districts/Supervisory Unions);

D. Meeting the Professional Development Needs of Head Start Programs;

E. Early Childhood Systems, including the BBF State Advisory Council, Inc., Building Bright Futures (BBF) Regional Councils, STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS), Services for Children Birth to Age 3 with Disabilities, and Services for Military Families.

Types of Survey Questions

The 2012-2013 survey contained close-ended and open-ended survey questions. Using close-ended survey questions, the VHSSCO asked each Head Start grantee (n=7) and each Early Head Start grantee (n=4) to rate their *Extent of Involvement* with partners/service providers/ organizations and their *Degree of Difficulty* in engaging in a variety of collaborative activities with partners/service providers/organizations.

The survey asked each Head Start and Early Head Start grantee to rate their *Extent of Involvement* by using a four-point scale to assign points to each question's response. The response definitions and corresponding points were as follows:

- NO WORKING RELATIONSHIP (1 point): You have little or no contact with each other (i.e. you do not make/receive referrals, work together on projects/activities, share information, etc.)
- COOPERATION (2 points): You exchange information. This includes making and receiving referrals, even when you serve the same families.
- COORDINATION (3 points): You work together on projects or activities. Examples: parents from the service provider's agency are invited to your parent education night; the service provider offers health screenings for the children at your site.
- COLLABORATION (4 points): You share resources and/or have formal written assignments or roles. Examples: co-funded staff or building costs; joint grant funding for a new initiative; an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) on transition, etc.

The survey instructions asked each Head Start and Early Head Start grantee to use the *Degree of Difficulty* four-point rating scale to assign points for each question response as follows:

- EXTREMELY DIFFICULT (1 points)
- DIFFICULT (2 points)
- SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT (3 points)
- NOT AT ALL DIFFICULT (4 point).

The survey contained open-ended questions, and they were:

1. Please describe any other issue you may have regarding access to the priority area and resources.
2. What is working well in your efforts to address the priority areas needs of children and families in your program?

Knowing the responses made by Head Start and Early Head Start grantees to these questions is important because they add contextual information about the strengths and opportunities for collaboration, coordination, and alignment. For instance, if one of the priority areas receives six or more responses indicating there is no working relationship between Head Start and Early

Head Start grantees and a specific partner, then the comment section may indicate why that is the case.

Tipping Point Methodology to Determine and Color Code Degrees of Collaboration

For prior VHSSCO Head Start and Early Head Start needs assessment reports, the VHSSCO calculated the mean of the responses by Head Start and Early Head Start grantees to the choices offered in the above four-point scale survey questions. Because the total number of responses to each question is so small -- 11 or less possible responses per question, the VHSSCO decided that calculating means and reporting them as percentages in this report would not be as informative as it would have been if the number of total numbers of responses to the questions were a lot higher.

Instead, the VHSSCO decided to use an alternate method, called the Tipping Point Approach, to identify degrees of collaboration from responses to the four-point scale questions. This approach consists of summing the total number of possible responses by Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantees to the choices offered in the above four-point scale questions and identifying whether a majority of the total number of responses to the question clustered along the four-point continuum of the four-point *Extent of Involvement* or the *Degree of Difficulty* scales.

The total number of possible responses to the four-point scale questions varied. For questions answered by the seven Head Start and four Early Head Start grantees, the VHSSCO identified a sum of at least six of 11 possible responses as the Tipping Point score to discern patterns regarding the Collaboration Strengths and Collaboration Needs of Head Start and Early Head Start grantees in their *Extent of Involvement* with service providers/organizations and their *Degree of Difficulty* in engaging in activities and partnerships. The VHSSCO used a Tipping Point score of at least four to identify patterns from the responses by the seven Head Start grantees to the *Extent of Involvement* scale and the *Degree of Difficulty* scale questions. The VHSSCO used a Tipping Point score of at least two to identify patterns from responses by the four Early Head Start grantees to the four-point *Extent of Involvement* scale and the *Degree of Difficulty* scale questions.

Using the Tipping Point Approach, the VHSSCO analyzed the needs assessment survey data to discern patterns regarding the *Extent of Involvement* of Head Start and/or Early Head Stat grantees with State, regional, community, and local partners and the degree of difficulty of Head Start and/or Early Head Start programs in engaging in various activities with these partners. The VHSSCO tallied the frequencies/responses to the four-point scale survey questions and categorized the findings as either:

- **Collaboration Strengths:** Survey responses in which Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantees reported a relatively high level of involvement with service providers/ organizations and/or a relatively low degree of difficulty in engaging in activities and partnerships; or
- **Collaboration Needs:** Survey responses in which Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantees reported a relatively low level of involvement with service providers/organizations and/or a relatively high degree of difficulty in engaging in activities and partnerships.

Collaboration Strengths

The Coordination and Collaboration values on the four-point *Extent of Involvement* scale indicate a relatively high level of involvement by Head Start and Early Head Start grantees with service providers/organizations, and Not at All Difficult and Somewhat Difficult values on the four-point *Degree of Difficulty* Scale indicate a relatively low degree of difficulty by Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantees to engage in activities and partnerships. Boxes and rows highlighted in blue represent Collaboration Strengths in Figures 3-7, 9-10, and 12-18 below when:

- Six or more of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees in Figures 3, 13, and 15, four or more of seven Head Start grantees in Figures 6, 9, and 11, or four of four Early Head Start grantees in Figure 17 collectively rated their *Extent of Involvement* with service providers/organizations as either Coordination or Collaboration AND
- Six or more of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees in Figures 4, 14, and 16, four or more of seven Head Start grantees in Figures 5, 7, 10, and 12, or four of four Early Head Start grantees in Figure 18 collectively rated their *Degree of Difficulty* to engage in activities and partnerships as either Not at All Difficult or Somewhat Difficult.

Boxes and rows highlighted in blue also represent Collaboration Strengths in Figure 8 when more than half of seven Head Start grantees indicated that they put into place school transition activities to support successful transitions for Head Start children entering kindergarten.

Collaboration Needs

Collaboration Needs are represented by boxes and rows highlighted in green or yellow. Boxes and rows highlighted in green in Figures 4, 7, 9, 12-13, 15, and 17 represent Collaboration Needs when:

- Six or more of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees in Figures 13 and 15, four of seven Head Start grantees in Figure 9, or four of four Early Head Start grantees in Figure

17 collectively rated their *Extent of Involvement* with service providers/organizations as either Cooperation or Coordination AND/OR

- Six or more of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees in Figure 4 or more than four of seven Head Start grantees in Figures 7 and 12 collectively rated their *Degree of Difficulty* to engage in activities and partnerships as either Difficult or Somewhat Difficult.

Boxes and rows highlighted in yellow represent Collaboration Needs in Figures 3, 9, 11, 12, 13, 17, 19, and 20 when:

- More than six of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees in Figures 3, 13, 19, four or more of seven Head Start grantees in Figures 9 and 11, or three of four Early Head Start grantees in Figure 17 collectively rated their *Extent of Involvement* with service providers/organizations as either No Working Relationship or Collaboration;
- More than half of seven Head Start grantees in Figure 12 collectively rated their *Degree of Difficulty* to engage in activities and partnerships as either Difficult or Extremely Difficult;
- Six of seven Head Start grantees in Figure 11 collectively rated their *Extent of Involvement* with the school district's Title I director as either No Working Relationship, Cooperation, or Not Applicable; AND/OR
- Six or more of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees in Figure 20 collectively rated their *Degree of Difficulty* to engage in activities for military families as either Difficult or Not Applicable.

Determining the Relative Amounts of Collaboration Strengths and Collaboration Needs for Each HSSCO Priority Area

For each HSSCO Priority Area covered by this report, the VHSSCO tabulated the numbers of Collaboration Strengths and Collaboration Needs from the *Extent of Involvement* and *Degree of Difficulty* questions and calculated corresponding percentages of Collaboration Needs and Collaboration Strengths. This process enabled the VHSSCO to determine the relative amounts of Collaboration Strengths and Collaboration Needs for each HSSCO Priority Area.

Using the data collected for the Child Care and Professional Development Priority Areas as examples here, the VHSSCO calculated that there were 10 Collaborations Strengths and three Collaboration Needs for the Child Care Priority Area (see Figures 3 and 4 below) with corresponding percentages of 77 percent and 23 percent, respectively. By subtracting 77 percent from 23 percent, VHSSCO determined that the Child Care Priority Area has 54 percent more

Collaboration Strengths than Collaboration Needs. Applying this process to the Professional Development Priority Area, the VHSSCO calculated that the Professional Development Priority Area has 11 percent fewer Collaboration Strengths than Collaboration Needs.

Needs Assessment Findings

Organization and Content of Findings

The 2012-2013 findings of the Head Start and Early Head Start grantees are organized by the following topical areas:

- Child Care
- School Readiness: Head Start – Pre-K Partnerships
- School Transitions and Alignment of Head Start with Kindergarten – Grade 12
- Transitions of Services for Children Ages 3, 4, and 5 with Disabilities
- School Transitions for Children Experiencing Homelessness
- Professional Development
- Early Childhood Systems
- Early Childhood Systems – Services for Children from Birth to Age 3 with Disabilities
- Early Childhood Systems – Community Services: Services for Military Families

The VHSSCO did not compare the responses of Head Start grantees with those of Early Head Start grantees because the VHSSCO's *2012 Vermont Head Start and Early Head Start Needs Assessment* report discerned few if any differences between the responses of Head Start and Early Head Start grantees with respect to their levels of involvement with service providers/organizations and with respect to their degrees of difficulty engaging in activities and partnerships.

Child Care

Head Start and Early Head Start programs have child care partnerships with center-based child care programs and family-child care homes. The Child Development Division administers the Child Care Financial Assistance Program. CCFAP supplies child care subsidies to eligible families to assist them with paying for early care and education and school age care that meets their needs and promotes the best possible development for their children. CCFAP also support a system of good quality child care services that is readily available to Vermont's children and families. The combination of helping low-income families to access high-quality child care and to find resources to pay for full-day, full-year services to low children enrolled in Head Start and Early Head Start is a priority for the VHSSCO.

Strengths:

In Figure 3, six or more of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees ranked their involvement with the following child care organizations or service providers as either Collaboration or Coordination (see boxes and rows highlighted in blue):

- State Agency for Child Care: Child Development Division (e.g., Financial Assistance/Child Care Subsidy, Child Care Licensing, Quality Recognition and Improvement System like STARS);
- Local child care programs to support access to full-day, full-year services; and the
- State or regional policy/planning committee that addresses child care issues (e.g., State or BBF Regional Councils).

Figure 3: Extent of Involvement between Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees with Child Care Organizations/Service Providers

Rankings of Child Care Organizations/Service Providers	Early Head Start	Head Start	Total Early Head Start and Head Start
A. State Agency for Child Care: Child Development Division (e.g., Financial Assistance/Child Care Subsidy, Child Care Licensing, Quality Recognition and Improvement System like STARS)			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1	1	2
Coordination (work together)	1	2	3
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	2	4	6
B. Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (e.g., Community Child Care Support Agencies)			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	3	3	6
Coordination (work together)	0	3	3
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1	1	2
C. Local child care programs to support access to full-day, full-year services			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1	3	4
Coordination (work together)	0	0	0
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	3	4	7
D. State or regional policy/planning committees that address child care issues (e.g., State or Regional BBF Councils)			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0	0	0
Coordination (work together)	2	4	6
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	2	3	5
E. Higher education programs/services/resources related to child care (e.g., lab schools, student interns, cross-training)			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	3	3	6
Coordination (work together)	0	3	3
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1	1	2

For the Child Care Priority Area, there were 54 percent more Collaboration Strengths than Collaboration Needs. In Figure 4, seven or more of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees rated their degree of difficulty in engaging with child care organizations or service providers as either Somewhat Difficult or Not at All Difficult (highlighted blue) in seven of eight child care activities:

- Establishing linkages/partnerships with child care providers;
- Assisting families to access full-day, full-year services;
- Capacity to blend or braid Head Start or Early Head Start and child care funds to provide full-day, full-year services;
- Aligning policies and practices with other service providers;
- Sharing data/information on children that are jointly served (assessments, outcomes, etc.);
- Exchanging of information on roles and resources with other providers/organizations regarding child care and community needs assessment; and
- Getting involved with state planning and policy development for Child Care Development Block Grant (e.g. child care financial assistance program, licensing child care, specialized child care, child care referral, training, professional development incentives, program incentives, etc.).

Figure 4: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees to Engage in Child Care Activities

Rankings of Child Care Activities	Early Head Start	Head Start	Total Early Head Start and Head Start
A. Establishing linkages/partnerships with child care providers			
Extremely Difficult	0	1	1
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	4	3	7
Not at All Difficult	0	3	3
B. Assisting families to access full-day, full-year services			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	1	1
Somewhat Difficult	3	2	5
Not at All Difficult	1	4	5
C. Capacity to blend or braid, Head Start or Early Head Start and child care funds to provide full-day, full-year services			
Extremely Difficult	0	1	1
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	3	2	5
Not at All Difficult	1	4	5
D. Aligning policies and practices with other service providers			
Extremely Difficult	0	1	1

Figure 4: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees to Engage in Child Care Activities			
Rankings of Child Care Activities	**Early Head Start**	**Head Start**	**Total Early Head Start and Head Start**
Difficult	1	1	2
Somewhat Difficult	3	4	7
Not at All Difficult	0	1	1
E. Sharing data/information on children that are jointly served (assessments, outcomes, etc.)			
Extremely Difficult	0	1	1
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	3	3	6
Not at All Difficult	1	3	4
F. Exchanging information on roles and resources with other providers/organizations regarding child care and community needs assessment			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	1	1
Somewhat Difficult	2	2	4
Not at All Difficult	2	4	6
G. (New) Coordinating child care subsidy certificates based on service need (e.g. employment, seeking employment, training/education, Reach Up, self-employment, special health needs of parent)			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	1	3	4
Somewhat Difficult	2	2	4
Not at All Difficult	1	2	3
F. (New) Getting involved with state level planning and policy development for Child Care Development Block Grant (e.g. child care financial assistance program, licensing child care, specialized child care, child care referral, training, professional development incentives, program incentives, etc.)			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	1	1
Somewhat Difficult	2	2	4
Not at All Difficult	2	4	6

Needs:

In Figure 3, six of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with Child Care Resource and Referral Support Agencies (e.g., Community Child Care Support Agencies) and Higher Education programs/services/resources related to child care (e.g., lab schools, student interns, and cross-training) as either Cooperation or No Working Relationship (see rows and boxes highlighted in yellow). Meanwhile, eight of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees rated their *Degree of Difficulty* as either Difficult or Somewhat Difficult (see rows and boxes in Figure 4 highlighted in green) to coordinate child care subsidy certificates based on service need (e.g., employment, seeking new employment, training/education, Reach Up, self-employment, special health needs of parent).

Comments:

Three grantees reported:

- It has been difficult to keep families in Head Start and Early Head Start slots when they lose either their subsidy or their co-pay increases; families should jointly be categorically eligible for Head Start and subsidy for one full program year;
- A child care subsidy increase is needed;
- Better alignment of Head Start regulations with child care licensing regulations is needed;
- Some service areas are without quality full-day/full-year child care for possible collaboration with Head Start; and
- Lack of qualified providers; lack of funding to provide quality infant/toddler care.

School Readiness: Head Start – Pre-K Partnerships

To the maximum extent practicable, the Head Start Act requires each Head Start grantee to have one or more Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with the appropriate local entities, such as a Local Educational Agency (school, school district or supervisory union) responsible for managing publicly funded preschool/pre-k programs. During 2012-2013 program year, six of seven Head Start grantees reported that they had a MOU with a Local Educational Agency (school, school district or supervisory union) responsible for managing publicly funded pre-k programs. The terms of the MOUs include providing for a review of each of 10 activities and plans to coordinate these activities, as appropriate, as described in 642(e)(5)(A)(i-ii)(I-X) of the Head Start Act.

The VHSSCO added an 11th activity for this year's survey, and the activity is "Agreeing to shared school readiness goals and strategies based on the Vermont Head Start Association School Readiness Agreement (e.g. physical development and health, approaches to learning, cognitive development, activity, social-emotional development, and literacy/language development)." The survey data revealed that there were 100 percent more Collaboration Strengths than Collaboration Needs associated with the 11 activities (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees through Their MOUs with LEAs to Engage in School Readiness Activities with Publicly Funded Pre-K Programs	
Rankings of School Readiness Activities with Publicly Funded Pre-K Programs	**Head Start**
1. Educational activities, curricular objectives and instruction	
Extremely Difficult	1
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	0
Not at All Difficult	5
Not Applicable	1
2. Public Information dissemination and access to programs for families contacting Head Start or another preschool program	
Extremely Difficult	1
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	1
Not at All Difficult	4
Not Applicable	1
3. Selection priorities for eligible children to be served by programs	
Extremely Difficult	1
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	0
Not at All Difficult	5
Not Applicable	1
4. Service areas	
Extremely Difficult	1
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	1
Not at All Difficult	3
Not Applicable	2
5. Staff training, including opportunities for joint staff training on topics such as academic content standards, instructional methods, curricula, and social and emotional development	
Extremely Difficult	1
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	4
Not at All Difficult	1
Not Applicable	1
6. Joint/shared program technical assistance (e.g., on mutual needs, or to develop partnership	
Extremely Difficult	1
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	1
Not at All Difficult	3
Not Applicable	2
7. Provision of services to meet needs of working parents, as applicable	
Extremely Difficult	1
Difficult	1
Somewhat Difficult	0
Not at All Difficult	4
Not Applicable	1
8. Communications and parent outreach for smooth transitions to kindergarten	

Figure 5: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees through Their MOUs with LEAs to Engage in School Readiness Activities with Publicly Funded Pre-K Programs	
Rankings of School Readiness Activities with Publicly Funded Pre-K Programs	**Head Start**
Extremely Difficult	1
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	2
Not at All Difficult	3
Not Applicable	1
9. Provision and use of facilities, transportation, etc.	
Extremely Difficult	1
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	1
Not at All Difficult	3
Not Applicable	2
10. Other elements mutually agreed to by the parties to the MOU	
Extremely Difficult	1
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	2
Not at All Difficult	3
Not Applicable	1
11. (NEW) Agreeing to shared school readiness goals and strategies based on the Vermont Head Start Association School Readiness Agreement (e.g. physical development and health, approaches to learning, cognitive development, activity, social-emotional development, and literacy/language development)	
Extremely Difficult	1
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	3
Not at All Difficult	2
Not Applicable	1

Strengths:

Four or more of seven Head Start grantees ranked their degree of difficulty as Somewhat or Not at All Difficult to engage in the coordination of all 11 school readiness activities with publicly-funded pre-K programs in their respective service areas (see boxes and rows highlighted in blue in Figure 5). At least five of seven Head Start grantees ranked their degree of difficulty as Somewhat or Not at All Difficult to engage in the coordination of seven of 11 school readiness activities with publicly-funded pre-K programs in their respective service areas (see the boxes and rows highlighted in blue in Figure 5):

- Educational activities, curricular objectives and instruction;
- Public information dissemination and access to programs for families contacting Head Start or another preschool program;
- Selection priorities for eligible children to be served by programs;

- Staff training, including opportunities for joint training on topics such as academic content standards, instructional methods, curricula, and social and emotional development;
- Communications and parent outreach for smooth transitions to kindergarten;
- Other elements mutually agreed to by the parties to the MOU; and
- Agreeing to shared school readiness goals and strategies based on the Vermont Head Start Association School Readiness Agreement (e.g. physical development and health, approaches to learning, cognitive development, activity, social-emotional development, and literacy/language development)

One Head Start grantee responded Not Applicable regarding its degree of difficulty engaging in the coordination of all 11 school readiness activities with publicly-funded pre-K programs in its service area because it lacked a MOU with a Local Educational Agency (LEA) responsible for managing a publicly-funded pre-k program.

Needs:

Although the majority of Head Start grantees indicated that they had no Collaboration Needs based upon the data presented in Figure 5, four Head Start grantees offered the following concerns:

- In one school district, there has not been compliance with timelines for provision of services to children with disabilities and there has been friction with their designated Early Essential Education (EEE) classroom support person and our teachers;
- We could add VHSA school readiness goals to MOU;
- Asking supervisory unions to sign an MOU when we do not have a collaborative classroom or home based program in their area is challenging. They see no reason to sign under these circumstances; and
- This question refers to the Head Start Act requirement that Head Start programs have an MOU with local school district/supervisory union. The problem is that: (1) there is no comparable, statutory requirement for schools to have MOU with Head Start and (2) in regions, such as ours we have 20 LEAs, many of whom are not interested in an MOU, or joint programming with Head Start. There needs to be more focus on pushing schools/ LEAs to collaborate with Head Start!

Comments:

Head Start grantees provided the following examples of what is working well:

- Kindergarten teachers are becoming more informed of the value of pre-k programs;

- Good communication;
- Group meetings with SVSU and Directors of partnership programs;
- Joint training;
- We work with some superintendents and special education coordinators who value the importance of early childhood education; and
- The Kindergarten Summit with North Country SU; Quarterly meetings with the Orleans Southwest SU; shared trainings with North Country and Orleans Central SU.

School Transitions and Alignment of Head Start with Kindergarten – Grade 12

School transition from Head Start to public preschool supports children and their families in having a seamless process. The child continues to succeed and reach development outcomes that are appropriate for the individual child. The family has the parental supports needed for their child and community resources for the family's well-being and functioning during this time of change in their child's life.

Strengths:

The findings indicated that there were 39 percent more Collaboration Strengths than Collaboration Needs in this priority area. The majority of Head Start grantees reported high levels of involvement and engagement with LEAs to assist with the transitioning of Head Start children to kindergarten and implementation of various school transition activities to support the successful transitions of Head Start graduates into kindergarten. Five of seven Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with LEAs regarding the transition of preschool-aged Head Start children to kindergarten as either Coordination or Collaboration (see Figure 6). Five or more Head Start grantees rated their *Degree of Difficulty* to engage with LEAs on 13 of 16 school transitions activities as Somewhat or Not at All Difficult (see Figure 7). Four or more Head Start grantees indicated that they most often put into practice nine activities (highlighted in blue in Figure 8) to support successful transitions.

Figure 6: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees and LEAs regarding Transition from Head Start to Kindergarten

Rankings of Involvement with LEAs regarding Transition of Children from Head Start to Kindergarten	**Head Start**
A. Relationship with LEAs (e.g., school, supervisory union, or school district) regarding Transition from Preschool Head Start to Kindergarten	
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	2
Coordination (work together)	1
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	4

Figure 7: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage with LEAs on School Transition Activities	
Rankings of School Transitions Activities	**Head Start**
A. Coordinating with LEAs to implement systematic procedures for transferring Head Start program records to school	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	1
Somewhat Difficult	1
Not at All Difficult	5
B. Ongoing communication with LEAs to facilitate coordination of programs (including teachers, social workers, McKinney-Vento liaisons, etc.)	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	5
Not at All Difficult	2
C. Establishing and implementing comprehensive transition policies and procedures with LEAs	
Extremely Difficult	1
Difficult	2
Somewhat Difficult	2
Not at All Difficult	2
D. Linking LEA and Head Start services relating to language, numeracy and literacy	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	1
Somewhat Difficult	3
Not at All Difficult	3
E. Aligning Head Start curricula and assessments with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework (formerly the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework)	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	0
Not at All Difficult	7
F. Aligning Head Start curricula with state Early Learning Standards (Vermont Early Learning Standards)	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	0
Not at All Difficult	7
G. Partnering with LEAs and parents to assist individual children/families to transition to school, including review of portfolio/records	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	1
Somewhat Difficult	2
Not at All Difficult	4
H. Coordinating transportation with LEAs	
Extremely Difficult	2
Difficult	0

Figure 7: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage with LEAs on School Transition Activities	
Rankings of School Transitions Activities	**Head Start**
Somewhat Difficult	0
Not at All Difficult	5
I. Coordinating shared use of facilities with LEAs	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	1
Somewhat Difficult	1
Not at All Difficult	5
J. Coordinating with LEAs regarding other support services for children and families	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	6
Not at All Difficult	1
K. Conducting joint outreach to parents and LEA to discuss needs of children entering kindergarten	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	5
Not at All Difficult	2
L. Establishing policies and procedures that support children's transition to school that includes engagement with LEA	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	2
Somewhat Difficult	3
Not at All Difficult	2
M. Helping parents of limited English proficient children understand instructional and other information and services provided by the receiving school.	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	1
Somewhat Difficult	2
Not at All Difficult	4
N. Exchanging information with LEAs on roles, resources and regulations	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	3
Not at All Difficult	4
O. Aligning curricula and assessment practices with LEAs	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	5
Not at All Difficult	2
P. Organizing and participating in joint training, including transition-related training for school staff and Head Start staff	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	2
Somewhat Difficult	3

Figure 7: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage with LEAs on School Transition Activities	
Rankings of School Transitions Activities	**Head Start**
Not at All Difficult	2

Figure 8: Number of Head Start Grantees Putting into Practice School Transitions Activities to Support Successful Transitions for Head Start Children Entering Kindergarten	
School Transitions Activities Put into Practice by Head Start Grantees	**Head Start**
Kindergarten teacher visiting preschool	6
Kindergarten teacher participating in home visit	0
Kindergarten camps	3
Community event bringing kindergarten and preschool teachers together	5
Pre-k children visiting their kindergarten classroom	7
Pre-k teachers (Head Start and other providers) visiting a kindergarten classroom	5
Holding an elementary school-wide activity with pre-k children	2
Having a spring orientation about kindergarten for parents of preschool children	5
Having an individual meeting between a teacher and a parent of the preschool child	5
Sharing written records	7
Families meet with a kindergarten teacher	5
Families meet the principal	2
Families take a tour of the school	4
Families talk to parents of child's new classmates	1
Families attend a workshop for parents	3
Community partner hosts event for entering kindergarteners	2
None of these	0
Other (please specify): Teddy Bear Teas work well when children are invited for tea in local kindergarten	1

Six of the seven Head Start grantees described what is working well in coordinating efforts with LEAs to address the needs of children and families transitioning from Head Start to kindergarten:

- We collaborate with the schools ahead of time;
- We have open houses, teachers and principals coming to school to meet children and families;
- Field trips to the schools;
- Teachers share with parent permission observations/information about children's development;
- The fact that we are under the umbrella of WSESU;
- Director and key staff participate in local councils and teams (e.g., CIS, BBF, etc.)
- Early Education Services Manager actively participates in Kindergarten Screening and Teddy Bear Teas activities;
- Kindergarten transition portfolios;

- Services coordination with mental health staff;
- Internal support of family services staff;
- Teaching Strategies Gold assessment reports included in K transition portfolios;
- Providing parent information meeting and registration dates to parents;
- Joint transition training;
- The local relationship between staff;
- Local transition activities;
- Transition focused parent meetings required each Spring;
- Transition materials (e.g. books, resources) given to Head Start families each spring; and
- Schools are aware of McKinney-Vento and the need to provide services as well as the challenges for families to provide needed paperwork.

Needs:

Four or more Head Start grantees reported as either Somewhat Difficult or Difficult their engagement with LEAs on three of 16 school transitions (highlighted in green in Figure 7):

- Establishing and implementing comprehensive transition policies and procedures with LEAs;
- Establishing policies and procedures that support children's transition to school that includes engagement with LEA; and
- Organizing and participating in joint training, including transition-related training for school staff and Head Start staff.

Comments:

While the majority of Head Start grantees reported having low levels of difficulty engaging with LEAs on 13 of 16 school transitions activities (see Figure 7), six of seven Head Start grantees provided the following insights that they thought would help them engage with their community partners in school transitions efforts:

- More conscious effort on receiving school to collaborate with pre-k programs, i.e. teachers observing classrooms, working together to provide smooth transition (Kindergarten Orientation Parent Night), having receiving school officials visit pre-k classrooms (Principals, Kindergarten teachers, nurse and librarian);
- Established relationships between parents and school promote parental involvement in children's school experiences; research shows children whose parents are involved in their school have more success in school;
- Head Start focuses on implementing comprehensive, inclusive child development services coupled with family engagement endeavors. Our assessment data reveals that enrolled children are showing growth in identified school-readiness goals. This

information is being shared with parents, LEAs, teachers and principals. Individual child assessment data is being shared with kindergarten teachers during transition meetings;

- For certain elementary school that do not have pre-k partnership visits, it would benefit the parents and children to have an orientation open house in the spring to prepare families for the Fall;
- VHSSCO connecting with statewide school superintendents to develop a statewide MOA or a commitment to stronger partnerships on the local level around signing MOU's, transitions, etc.; and
- Research shows that when families are engaged in their child's transition the child has a more successful school transition.

Transitions of Services for Children Ages 3, 4, and 5 with Disabilities

Transitions of services for children ages 3, 4, and 5 with disabilities between Head Start programs and their State, local, and community partners requires a high degree of collaboration to ensure that Head Start programs effectively provides services to children with disabilities. Within the first 45 days of a child's entry into a Head Start program, Head Start programs are required to provide for developmental, hearing and vision screenings of all Head Start children. Children identified through the screening process to have possible disabilities are then referred by Head Start programs for evaluation to LEAs providing EEE services under Part B, Section 619 of IDEA. If a LEA determines that a child has a disability, then LEA staff works with Head Start staff and the child's parent(s) to design an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for the child. If appropriate, the child's progress with his or her Individualized Education Plan (IEP) helps the team identify needs and priorities for the child as part of a the child's plan to transition from Head Start to kindergarten. During the 2012-2013 program year, Head Start programs provided preschool disabilities services to 302 children with IEPs (Office of Head Start, 2013a.

<u>Strengths:</u>

Six of seven Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with local Part B/Section 619 special education providers) as Collaboration and the remaining Head Start grantee rated its Extent of Involvement with these providers as Coordination. Five of seven Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with the Agency of Education (State Lead Agency for Part B, Section 619: EEE) as either Coordination or Collaboration (see Figure 9). Meanwhile, five or more of Head Start grantees rated their *Degree of Difficulty* in engaging with their partners, including local Part B/Section 619 special education providers and school districts and

supervisory unions, in all school transition activities for children with disabilities as either Somewhat or Not at All Difficult (see Figure 10).

Figure 9: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees and State Agencies/Local Special Education Providers on Transition Services for Preschool-Aged Children with Disabilities

Rankings of School Transition Partnerships for Children with Disabilities	Head Start
A. State Lead Agency for Part B/619 (preschool special education, Early Essential Education)	
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	1
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1
Coordination (work together)	2
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	3
B. Local Part B/619 providers (preschool special education providers)	
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0
Coordination (work together)	1
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	6
C. State Education Agency—other programs/services (e.g., Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act, state improvement grants, state Response to Intervention)	
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	2
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	2
Coordination (work together)	1
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	2
D. Other federally funded programs for families of children with disabilities (e.g., Parent Training & Information Center, Family Voices, Department of Health-Maternal Child Health Division, Protection & Advocacy agency, Special Medical Services, etc.)	
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	1
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	3
Coordination (work together)	2
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1
E. Other state-funded programs for children with disabilities and their families (e.g., developmental services agencies)	
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	2
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	3
Coordination (work together)	1
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1
F. University/community college programs/services related to children with disabilities (e.g., University Centers of Excellence on Disability/others, Center on Disabilities and Community Inclusion at the University of Vermont)	
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	5
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1
Coordination (work together)	0
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1
G. Non-Head Start councils, committees or work groups that address policy/program issues regarding children with disabilities (e.g., State /Local Interagency Coordinating Council, preschool special education work/advisory group)	

Figure 9: Extent of Involvement between Head Start Grantees and State Agencies/Local Special Education Providers on Transition Services for Preschool-Aged Children with Disabilities	
Rankings of School Transition Partnerships for Children with Disabilities	**Head Start**
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	5
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0
Coordination (work together)	1
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1

Figure 10: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage with Organizations/Service Providers on School Transition Activities for Preschool-Aged Children with Disabilities	
Rankings of School Transition Activities for Child with Disabilities	**Head Start**
A. Obtaining timely Part B/619 (preschool special education) evaluations of children	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	1
Somewhat Difficult	5
Not at All Difficult	1
Not applicable	0
B. Having Head Start staff attend IEP (Individualized Education Plan) meetings	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	0
Not at All Difficult	7
Not applicable	0
C. Coordination services with Part B/619 providers: Early Essential Education	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	1
Not at All Difficult	6
Not applicable	0
D. Sharing data/information on jointly served children (assessments, outcomes, etc.)	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	4
Not at All Difficult	3
Not applicable	0
E. Exchanging information on roles and resources with other providers/organizations regarding services for children with disabilities and their families	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	1
Not at All Difficult	5
Not applicable	1

Figure 10: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage with Organizations/Service Providers on School Transition Activities for Preschool-Aged Children with Disabilities	
Rankings of School Transition Activities for Child with Disabilities	**Head Start**
F. (New) Aligning policies and practices with school districts/supervisory unions	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	1
Somewhat Difficult	2
Not at All Difficult	3
Not applicable	1

Needs:

In contrast to the high levels of Head Start involvement with the Agency of Education regarding Part B/Section 619 services and local Part B/Section 619 providers on school transition for children with disabilities (highlighted in blue in Figure 9), four or more of seven Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with the following four organizations involved in school transition services for children with disabilities as either Coordination or Collaboration (highlighted in yellow in Figure 9):

- State Education Agency—other programs/services (e.g., Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act, state improvement grants, state Response to Intervention)
- Other state-funded programs for children with disabilities and their families (e.g., developmental service agencies)
- University/community college programs/services related to children with disabilities (e.g., University Centers of Excellence on Disability/others, Center on Disabilities and Community Inclusion at the University of Vermont)
- Non-Head Start councils, committees or work groups that address policy/program issues regarding children with disabilities (e.g., State /Local Interagency Coordinating Council, preschool special education work/advisory group)

Meanwhile, five of seven Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with Other federally funded programs for families of children with disabilities (e.g., Parent Training & Information Center, Family Voices, Department of Health-Maternal Child Health Division, Protection & Advocacy agency, Special Medical Services, etc.) involved in school transition services for children with disabilities as either Cooperation or Coordination (highlighted in green in Figure 9).

Six of seven Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with local Part B/Section 619 special education providers as Collaboration and the remaining Head Start grantee rated its

Extent of Involvement with these providers as Coordination (see Figure 9). Meanwhile, five or more of Head Start grantees rated their *Degree of Difficulty* in engaging with their partners in all school transition activities for children with disabilities as either Somewhat or Not at All Difficult (see Figure 10).

Even though Figure 10 depicts that four or more of seven Head Start grantees ranked getting timely Part B/Section 610 evaluations of children and sharing data/information on jointly served children with disabilities as Somewhat Difficult, these two activities consistently rank low on the *Degree of Difficulty* scale on prior annual Head Start needs assessments and are areas for the VHSSCO to monitor and continue to support in the next annual work plan.

School Transition for Children Experiencing Homelessness

Children and their families experiencing homelessness is a HSSCO Priority Area that Head Start program directors in previous needs assessment surveys have rated their Head Start programs as having low levels of involvement with community partners providing services to children experiencing homelessness and as having with high degrees of difficulty engaging in activities with partners to assist children and families experiencing homelessness. Although a majority of Head Start grantees report a couple signs of strength for this HSSCO Priority Area in the 2012-2013 needs assessment survey, the majority of responses by Head Start grantees to questions in this HSSCO Priority Area indicate that there is large need for improvement in this area. Anecdotally, Head Start directors report more families with complex and co-occurring issues including homelessness, mental health and substance abuse issues. Because resources for supporting homelessness in Vermont are limited, collaboration between Head Start grantees and their local partners, such as public schools, school districts, or supervisory unions, to find affordable permanent housing for children and their families experiencing homelessness and to help these children and their families transition from Head Start to kindergarten is a priority.

<u>Strengths:</u>

There were 33 percent less Collaboration Strengths than Collaboration Needs for the Children Experiencing Homelessness Priority Area. Five or more of Head Start grantees rated the *Degree of Difficulty* of their Head Start programs as either Somewhat or Not at All Difficult to engage with their partners in two school transition activities for children experiencing homelessness: Implementing school transitions policies and procedures to ensure that children experiencing homelessness needs are prioritized and Obtaining sufficient data on the needs of homeless children to inform the school transition (see the rows and boxes highlighted in blue in Figure 12).

Figure 11: Extent of Involvement of Head Start Grantees with Children Experiencing Homelessness Organizations/Service Providers	
Rankings of Organizations/Service Providers for Children Experiencing Homelessness	**Head Start**
A. Local McKinney-Vento homelessness liaison (e.g., public school, community services)	
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	4
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	2
Coordination (work together)	1
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	0
Not Applicable	0
B. School district Title I Director (if applicable, and if Title I funds are being used to support early care and education programs for children experiencing homelessness) * You may check not applicable.	
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	1
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	2
Coordination (work together)	0
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1
Not Applicable	3

Figure 12: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start Grantees to Engage in School Transition Activities for Children Experiencing Homelessness	
Rankings of School Transition Activities for Children Experiencing Homelessness	**Head Start**
A. Implementing school transitions policies and procedures to ensure that children experiencing homelessness needs are prioritized	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	2
Somewhat Difficult	3
Not at All Difficult	2
B. Obtaining sufficient data on the needs of homeless children to inform the school transition	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	4
Not at All Difficult	3
C. Engaging the Local Education Agency (LEA), including the local McKinney-Vento Liaison, in conducting staff cross training and planning activities	
Extremely Difficult	2
Difficult	2
Somewhat Difficult	2
Not at All Difficult	1
D. In coordination with LEA, developing and implementing family outreach and support efforts under McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and transition planning for children experiencing homelessness	
Extremely Difficult	1
Difficult	3
Somewhat Difficult	3
Not at All Difficult	0

Needs:

Six of seven Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with the local McKinney-Vento liaison (e.g., public school, community services) as either No Working Relationship or Cooperation (see the rows and boxes highlighted in yellow in Figure 11). Four of seven Head Start grantees rated the *Degree of Difficulty* of their Head Start programs to engage LEAs, including the local McKinney-Vento Liaison, in conducting staff cross training and planning activities for children experiencing homelessness as Extremely Difficult or Difficult (see the rows and boxes highlighted in yellow in Figure 12). Six of seven Head Start grantees rated the *Degree of Difficulty* of their Head Start programs in coordination with LEAs to develop and implement family outreach and support efforts under McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and transition planning for children experiencing homelessness as Difficult or Somewhat Difficult (see the rows and boxes highlighted in green in Figure 12).

Three of seven Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with the school district's Title I director as No Working Relationship or Cooperation and three of seven Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with the school district's Title I director as Not Applicable (see the rows and boxes highlighted in yellow in Figure 11). This data indicates that there is a need for increased levels of involvement between Head Start programs and Title I directors in school districts and that schools may not be using Title I funds to support for early care and education programs for children for homelessness.

Comments:

Four of six Head Start grantees added the following comments regarding school transition in general:

- How to assist homeless families in the transition process when they are a chronic "moving target";
- Issues vary from school to school. There are often delays in setting up face-to-face transition meetings;
- Would like the annual Kindergarten conference to focus on transitions and the Head Start/LEA partnership. Would like to see AOE require LEA's sign our MOU's; and
- The McKinney-Vento Liaison is often a person is the school system that has multiple responsibilities and is difficult to engage due to time constraints.

Professional Development

Head Start and Early Head Start grantees have access to the federal Head Start Training and Technical Assistance System (T/TA) and the State of Vermont's Professional Development systems. The federal Head Start T/TA System consists of OHS-funded National Centers on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness; Parent, Family, and Community Engagement; Quality, Teaching, and Learning; Health; and Program Management and Fiscal Operations; the Early Head Start National Resource Center; Head Start State-Based T/TA Network; and the Head Start Regional-Based T/TA Network. The State of Vermont's Professional Development system includes several components: Bright Futures Information System database which includes a training calendar, license information and quality improvement rating system data; Northern Lights Career Development Center offering career pathways, credentials and certificate programs; Child Development Division grant incentives to help pay for professional development of program instructors and individuals; CIS professional development offerings; and professional development services provided by the Agency of Education.

Strengths:

There were 11 percent less Collaboration Strengths than Collaboration Needs for this priority area. Eight or more of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with the Vermont Agency of Education, the Northern Lights Career Development Center, the Head Start State-Based T/TA Network, Local CIS, and the Child Development Division which administers the Bright Futures Information System and funds professional development grant resources and individual professional recognition bonuses as either Coordination or Collaboration (see the rows and boxes highlighted in blue in Figure 13). At the same time, eight or more Head Start and Early Head Start grantees rated their *Degree of Difficulty* as either Somewhat or Not at All Difficult to engage with their professional development partners in seven of seven professional development activities Somewhat or Not at All Difficult (see the rows and boxes highlighted in blue in Figure 14).

Figure 13: Extent of Involvement of Head Start Grantees with Professional Development Service Providers/Organizations

Rankings of Professional Development Service Providers/Organizations	Early Head Start	Head Start	Total Early Head Start and Head Start
A. Institutions of Higher Education (4-year)			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	1	2	3
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	3	4	7
Coordination (work together)	0	0	0
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	0	1	1
B. Institutions of Higher Education (less than 4-year) (e.g., community colleges)			

Figure 13: Extent of Involvement of Head Start Grantees with Professional Development Service Providers/Organizations			
Rankings of Professional Development Service Providers/Organizations	**Early Head Start**	**Head Start**	**Total Early Head Start and Head Start**
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	3	7	10
Coordination (work together)	1	0	1
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	0	0	0
C. On-line courses/programs			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	2	3	5
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	2	4	6
Coordination (work together)	0	0	0
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	0	0	0
D. Child Care Resource and Referral Network			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	2	2	4
Coordination (work together)	2	4	6
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	0	1	1
E. Head Start State-Based Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) Network			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0	0	0
Coordination (work together)	0	3	3
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	4	4	8
F. Other T/TA networks (regional, state)			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0	2	2
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1	2	3
Coordination (work together)	2	2	4
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1	1	2
G. Service providers/organizations offering relevant training/TA cross-training opportunities			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0	1	1
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	3	3	6
Coordination (work together)	1	2	3
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	0	1	1
H. a. National Center on Cultural & Linguistic Responsiveness			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	4	5	9
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0	2	2
Coordination (work together)	0	0	0
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	0	0	0
H. b. National Center on Parent, Family & Community Engagement			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	3	5	8
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0	2	2
Coordination (work together)	0	0	0
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1	0	1
H. c. National Center on Quality Teaching & Learning			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	3	5	8
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0	2	2
Coordination (work together)	0	0	0

Figure 13: Extent of Involvement of Head Start Grantees with Professional Development Service Providers/Organizations			
Rankings of Professional Development Service Providers/Organizations	**Early Head Start**	**Head Start**	**Total Early Head Start and Head Start**
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1	0	1
H. d. Early Head Start National Resource Center			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	1	4	5
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	2	3	5
Coordination (work together)	1	0	1
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	0	0	0
H. e. National Center on Program Management & Fiscal Operations			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	3	5	8
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0	2	2
Coordination (work together)	1	0	1
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	0	0	0
H. f. National Center on Health			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	2	4	6
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1	3	4
Coordination (work together)	0	0	0
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1	0	1
I. (NEW) Local Education Agencies school transitions and school readiness training			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	2	4	6
Coordination (work together)	0	1	1
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	2	2	4
J. (NEW) Local CIS			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1	2	3
Coordination (work together)	0	3	3
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	3	2	5
K. (NEW) State CIS			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1	2	3
Coordination (work together)	2	3	5
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1	2	3
L. (NEW) Local Reach-Up			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1	3	4
Coordination (work together)	1	3	4
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	2	1	3
M. (NEW) Agency of Education (f.k.a. Department of Education)			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0	1	1
Coordination (work together)	3	3	6
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1	3	4

Figure 13: Extent of Involvement of Head Start Grantees with Professional Development Service Providers/Organizations			
Rankings of Professional Development Service Providers/Organizations	**Early Head Start**	**Head Start**	**Total Early Head Start and Head Start**
N. (NEW) Northern Lights Career Development Center which holds training and workshops and provides information about career pathways, workshops, trainings, and other professional development			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	1	0	1
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0	1	1
Coordination (work together)	2	2	4
Collaboration (share resources/agreements)	1	4	5
O. (NEW) Child Development Division which administers the Bright Futures Information System (e.g. training calendar) and funds professional development grant resources and individual professional recognition bonuses			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	1	0	1
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0	2	2
Coordination (work together)	1	1	2
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	2	4	6

Figure 14: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees to Engage in Professional Development Activities			
Rankings of Professional Development Activities	**Early Head Start**	**Head Start**	**Total Count Early Head Start and Head Start**
A. Transferring credits between public institutions of learning			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	1	1
Somewhat Difficult	1	1	2
Not at All Difficult	3	5	8
B. Accessing early childhood education degree programs in the community			
Extremely Difficult	0	1	1
Difficult	1	1	2
Somewhat Difficult	0	3	3
Not at All Difficult	3	2	5
C. Accessing Training & Technical Assistance opportunities in the community (including cross-training)			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	1	1
Somewhat Difficult	1	2	3
Not at All Difficult	3	4	7
D. Accessing scholarships and other financial support for professional development programs/activities			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	1	1	2
Somewhat Difficult	2	4	6
Not at All Difficult	1	2	3

Figure 14: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees to Engage in Professional Development Activities			
Rankings of Professional Development Activities	**Early Head Start**	**Head Start**	**Total Count Early Head Start and Head Start**
E. Staff release time to attend professional development activities			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	1	0	1
Somewhat Difficult	1	4	5
Not at All Difficult	2	3	5
F. Accessing on-line professional development opportunities (e.g., availability of equipment, internet connection, etc.)			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	1	1	2
Somewhat Difficult	2	2	4
Not at All Difficult	1	4	5
G. Exchanging information on roles and resources with other providers/organizations regarding professional development			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	3	2	5
Not at All Difficult	1	5	6

Eight of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees offered strengths-based observations about what is working well in their efforts to address the professional development needs of their staff:

- Working with our national and regional T/TA systems;
- We develop professional development plans with each staff to address their educational needs and work with them by supporting financially as much as possible so they can achieve the degree necessary to remain employed by the program;
- Utilization of Head Start T/TA system;
- Providing information on the Fundamentals Course, Child Development Associate credential, Peer Review, APL;
- Fundamentals offered as a workshop rather than college credit course;
- Utilization of Northern Lights to stay informed of courses/training options;
- On-site Child Development Associate credential mentoring;
- Annual offering of Leading From Within training;
- T/TA specialists--Shannon Shaw and Sharon Adams;
- Vermont Child Care Industry & Careers Council (VCCICC) Apprenticeship Program

- Statewide Professional Preparation and Development Committee researching early childhood programs with various higher education institutions that will accommodate working teachers;
- Northern Lights Career Development Center tracking system;
- Monthly in-service training;
- Many training opportunities offered by Champlain Valley Head Start and other agencies;
- Champlain Valley Head Start staff supported to develop and revisit Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP);
- Plenty of opportunities in our area;
- Providing across the board training for all employees (Touchpoints, Bridges Out of Poverty);
- Providing a salary boost when degrees are attained;
- Combining with other programs for greater statewide/regional training events;
- Local access to several institutions of higher learning;
- Sharing community training opportunities with staff;
- Survey staff about their training needs/interests;
- Targeted training to improve child outcomes; and
- Financial support for professional development.

Needs:

Seven of 11 Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with the following professional development service providers as either Cooperation or Coordination (see the rows and boxes highlighted in green in Figure 13):

- Child Care Resource and Referral Network;
- Other T/TA networks (regional, state);
- Service providers/organizations offering relevant training/technical assistance cross-training opportunities;
- LEAs offering school transitions and school readiness activities;
- State CIS; and
- Local Reach Up.

Ten of 11 Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with the following professional development service providers as either Cooperation or Coordination (see the rows and boxes highlighted in yellow in Figure 13):

- Four-Year Institutions of Higher Education;
- Less Than Four-Year Institutions of Higher Education (e.g., community colleges);

- Online courses/programs;
- Head Start National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness;
- Head Start National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement;
- Head Start National Center on Quality, Teaching, and Learning;
- Early Head Start National Resource Center;
- Head Start National Center on Program Management and Fiscal Operations; and
- Head Start National Center on Health.

Comments:

Five grantees raised the following issues regarding professional development activities and resources:

- Limited time to free up staff to offer trainings reflective of the professional development plans.
- Limited resources regarding training for sensory integration.
- Limited early childhood college courses in close proximity."
- We use the National Centers as a resource...found it hard to select them into one of these designated categories
- It can be difficult to find teachers with an infant/toddler Child Development Associate Credential.
- More scholarships would be helpful.

Early Childhood Systems

The VHSSCO and Head Start and Early Head Start grantees collaborate at varying degrees with State, regional and local organizations and service providers on early childhood systems activities in Vermont.

Strengths:

Ten or more of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with the following early childhood systems partners as either Coordination or Collaboration:

- BBF Regional Councils;
- STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS);
- State efforts to unify early childhood data systems (e.g., child/family/program assessment data);
- CIS – Intake Coordinator;
- CIS – Child Care Coordinator; and

- CIS – Individual Child/Family Team for children dually enrolled in CIS and Head Start or Early Head Start (see the rows and boxes highlighted in blue in Figure 15).

Figure 15: Extent of Involvement of Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees with Early Childhood Systems' Organizations/Service Providers

Ranking of Early Childhood Systems' Organizations/Service Providers	Early Head Start	Head Start	Total Early Head Start and Head Start
A. BBF State Advisory Council, Inc.			
No Working Relationship(little/no contact)	0	1	1
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1	3	4
Coordination(work together)	2	1	3
Collaboration (share resources/agreements)	1	1	2
Do not know	0	1	1
B. BBF Regional Council(s)			
No Working Relationship(little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0	1	1
Coordination(work together)	2	3	5
Collaboration (share resources/agreements)	2	3	5
Do not know	0	0	0
C. State Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) -- STARS			
No Working Relationship(little/no contact)	0	1	1
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0	0	0
Coordination(work together)	1	3	4
Collaboration (share resources/agreements)	3	3	6
Do not know	0	0	0
D. State efforts to unify early childhood data systems (e.g., child/family/ program assessment data)			
No Working Relationship(little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0	1	1
Coordination(work together)	3	5	8
Collaboration (share resources/agreements)	1	1	2
Do not know	0	0	0
E. CIS - Intake Coordinator			
No Working Relationship(little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0	0	0
Coordination(work together)	3	6	9
Collaboration (share resources/agreements)	1	1	2
Do not know	0	0	0
F. CIS - Child Care Coordinator			
No Working Relationship(little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0	0	0
Coordination(work together)	3	5	8
Collaboration (share resources/agreements)	1	2	3
Do not know	0	0	0
G. CIS - Intake Team			
No Working Relationship(little/no contact)	0	0	0

Figure 15: Extent of Involvement of Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees with Early Childhood Systems' Organizations/Service Providers			
Ranking of Early Childhood Systems' Organizations/Service Providers	**Early Head Start**	**Head Start**	**Total Early Head Start and Head Start**
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1	2	3
Coordination(work together)	2	3	5
Collaboration (share resources/agreements)	1	2	3
Do not know	0	0	0
H. CIS - Individual Child/Family Team for children dually enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start			
No Working Relationship(little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1	1	2
Coordination (work together)	1	2	3
Collaboration (share resources/agreements)	2	2	4
Do not know	0	2	2
I. CIS - Early Childhood Consultation Team			
No Working Relationship(little/no contact)	0	1	1
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1	1	2
Coordination(work together)	2	3	5
Collaboration (share resources/agreements)	1	1	2
Do not know	0	1	1
J. CIS - Administrative Team			
No Working Relationship(little/no contact)	0	0	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1	1	2
Coordination(work together)	1	4	5
Collaboration (share resources/agreements)	1	1	2
Do not know	1	1	2

At the same time, nine or more of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees rated their *Degree of Difficulty* as either Somewhat or Not at All Difficult to engage with their early childhood systems partners in nine of nine professional development activities (see the rows and boxes highlighted in blue in Figure 16).

Figure 16: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees to Engage in Early Childhood Systems' Activities			
Ranking of Early Childhood Systems' Activities	**Early Head Start**	**Head Start**	**Total Early Head Start and Head Start**
A. Exchanging information from and providing input to the BBF State Advisory Council, Inc.			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	2	2	4
Not at All Difficult	2	4	6
Do not know	0	1	1
B. Exchanging information from and providing input to BBF Regional Council(s)			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0

Figure 16: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees to Engage in Early Childhood Systems' Activities			
Ranking of Early Childhood Systems' Activities	**Early Head Start**	**Head Start**	**Total Early Head Start and Head Start**
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	0	0	0
Not at All Difficult	4	7	11
Do not know	0	0	0
C. Participating in STARS, the state QRIS			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	1	1
Somewhat Difficult	0	0	0
Not at All Difficult	4	5	9
Do not know	0	1	1
D. Participating in state efforts to unify early childhood data systems			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	1	1
Somewhat Difficult	1	1	2
Not at All Difficult	3	4	7
Do not know	0	1	1
E. Communicating with the CIS Intake Coordinator when a child is identified as enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	0	0	0
Not at All Difficult	4	7	11
Do not know	0	0	0
F. Referring a child and family to CIS			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	0	1	1
Not at All Difficult	4	6	10
Do not know	0	0	0
G. Receiving a referral from CIS for a child and family			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	0	0	0
Not at All Difficult	4	7	11
Do not know	0	0	0
H. Attending an individual child/family CIS team meeting to coordinate services			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	3	6	9
Not at All Difficult	1	1	2
Do not know	0	0	0

Figure 16: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees to Engage in Early Childhood Systems' Activities			
Ranking of Early Childhood Systems' Activities	**Early Head Start**	**Head Start**	**Total Early Head Start and Head Start**
I. Participating in the CIS Administrative Team			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	2	3	5
Not at All Difficult	1	3	4
Do not know	1	1	2

Comments:

Eight of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees reported the following was working well in their efforts to partner with early childhood systems initiatives in Vermont:

- Involvement in local BBF Council;
- Partnering with regional childcare provider networks;
- Involvement in work groups and process management team for child care licensing regulations revision;
- Head Start participation in the early childhood data systems development;
- Good relationship with the Child Development Division;
- Participation on local BBF Councils;
- Early Head Start participation in early childhood data systems development;
- All Head Start and collaborative sites have 4 or 5 stars in STARS;
- Champlain Valley Head Start attendance at all regional BBF Councils;
- Early Head Start collaborative sites have 4 or 5 stars in STARS;
- Champlain Valley Early Head Start attendance at all regional BBF Councils;
- Having military families as liaisons for centers and families;
- Combining PCC and Early Head Start services and funds;
- Working with the CIS administrative team who holds the best interest of our clients as our key focus (not silos);
- CIS administrative team, family support child care CIS team;
- Inviting our "neighbors" to our trainings;
- Head Start participation in Child Development Division's Strengthening Families grant; and
- Early Head Start participation in the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC).

Needs:

Seven or more Head Start and Early Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with the following early childhood systems partners as either Cooperation or Coordination (see the rows and boxes highlighted in green in Figure 15):

- BBF State Advisory Council, Inc.;
- CIS-Intake Team;
- CIS-Early Childhood Consultation Team; and
- CIS-Administrative Team.

Because of these ratings, Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and these partners, with the support of the VHSSCO, need to improve their collaborative work.

Early Childhood Systems – Services for Children from Birth to Age 3 with Disabilities

Within Vermont's early childhood systems, Early Head Start grantees are involved with organizations providing services to children birth to age 3 with disabilities and are engaged in activities to support these children.

Strengths:

Four of four Early Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with local Part C: CIS/Early Intervention providers as either Coordination or Collaboration (see the boxes and rows highlighted in blue in Figure 17). The same Early Head Start grantees rated their *Degree of Difficulty* as either Somewhat or Not at All Difficult to engage with their partners in five of five activities to serve children with disabilities (see the boxes and rows highlighted in blue in Figure 18):

- Obtaining timely Part C: CIS/Early Intervention (EI) evaluations of children;
- Having Head Start staff attend Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) meetings, known in Vermont as CIS individual child/family One Plan meetings;
- Coordination services with Part C: CIS/EI;
- Sharing data/information on jointly served children (assessments, outcomes, etc.); and
- Exchanging information on roles and resources with other providers/organizations regarding services for children with disabilities and their families.

Figure 17: Extent of Involvement of Early Head Start Grantees with Organizations/ Providers Serving Children from Birth to Age 3 with Disabilities	
Ranking of Organizations/Service Providers for Children from Birth to Age 3 with Disabilities	**Early Head Start**
A. State Lead Agency for Part C: CIS/Early Intervention (EI)	
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	2
Coordination (work together)	1
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1
B. Local Part C providers: CIS/EI	
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	0
Coordination (work together)	2
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	2
C. Other federally funded programs for families of children with disabilities (e.g., Parent Training & Information Center, Family Voices, Dept. of Health-Maternal Child Health, Protection & Advocacy agency, Special Medical Services, etc.)	
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	0
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	2
Coordination (work together)	1
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1
D. Other state-funded programs for children with disabilities and their families (e.g., developmental services agencies)	
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	2
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1
Coordination (work together)	1
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	0
E. University/community college programs/services related to children with disabilities (e.g., University Centers of Excellence on Disability/others, Center on Disabilities and Community Inclusion at UVM)	
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	1
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	2
Coordination (work together)	0
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1
F. Non-Head Start councils, committees or work groups that address policy/program issues regarding children with disabilities (e.g., State /Local Inter-agency Coordinating Council, preschool special education work/advisory group)	
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	1
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	1
Coordination (work together)	1
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1

Figure 18: Degree of Difficulty for Early Head Start Grantees to Engage in Activities for Children from Birth to Age 3 with Disabilities	
Ranking of Activities for Children from Birth to Age 3 with Disabilities	**Early Head Start**
A. Obtaining timely Part C: CIS/EI evaluations of children	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	1
Not at All Difficult	3
B. Having Head Start staff attend IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan) now known as CIS individual child/family One Plan meetings	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	0
Not at All Difficult	4
C. Coordination services with Part C: CIS/EI	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	1
Not at All Difficult	3
D. Sharing data/information on jointly served children (assessments, outcomes, etc.)	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	2
Not at All Difficult	2
E. Exchanging information on roles and resources with other providers/organizations regarding services for children with disabilities and their families	
Extremely Difficult	0
Difficult	0
Somewhat Difficult	1
Not at All Difficult	3

Needs:

Two or more of four Early Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with three Part C service providers/organizations as either Cooperation or Coordination (see the rows and boxes highlighted in green in Figure 17):

- State Lead Agency for Part C: CIS/Early Intervention (EI);
- Other federally funded programs for families of children with disabilities (e.g., Parent Training & Information Center, Family Voices, Department of Health, Maternal Child Health Division, Protection & Advocacy agency, Special Medical Services, etc.); and
- Non-Head Start councils, committees or work groups that address policy/program issues regarding children with disabilities (e.g., State /Local Interagency Coordinating Council, preschool special education work/advisory group).

Three of four Early Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with two Part C service providers/organizations as either Coordination or Collaboration (see the rows and boxes highlighted in yellow in Figure 17):

- Other state-funded programs for children with disabilities and their families (e.g., developmental services agencies) and
- University/community college programs/services related to children with disabilities (e.g., University Centers of Excellence on Disability/others, Center on Disabilities and Community Inclusion at the University of Vermont).

Early Childhood Systems – Community Services: Services for Military Families

Within Vermont's early childhood systems, fostering collaboration among Head Start and Early Head Start grantees, the U.S. military, and military families is one of 11 HSSCO Priority Areas because the federal OHS, the federal Office of Child Care, and the U.S. Department of Defense have a shared goal to support outreach by Head Start and Early Head Start grantees to military families whose children do not have access to quality early childhood services when located away from military installations. The Vermont Child Care Liaison for Military Families and the VHSSCO Director have been working together and will be using this needs assessment survey data to address this shared goal.

Strengths:

There are none to report based on the web survey data.

Needs:

This priority area had 100 percent more Needs than Strengths. Seven or more of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees rated their *Extent of Involvement* with the following four organizations/service providers to serve children of National Guard families as either Cooperation or No Working Relationship (see the rows and boxes highlighted in yellow in Figure 19):

- Vermont National Guard Family Assistance Center;
- Local Child Care Providers;
- Military, Family, Community Network; and
- Community Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.

Comments:

Three of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees commented (see the rows and boxes highlighted brown in Figure 19):

- We do not have any families in the military, but if we did, we would have more involvement; and
- Last year, we had some meetings with State of Vermont's Child Care Liaison for Military Families. We were invited to their trainings, but were unable to attend due to our federal monitoring review. We have not pursued this further as there was not a demonstrated need in our community assessment.

Figure 19: Extent of Involvement between Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees and Organizations/Providers Serving Military Families

Ranking of Organizations/Providers Serving Military Families	Early Head Start	Head Start	Total Early Head Start and Head Start
A. Vermont National Guard Family Assistance Center			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	2	5	7
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	2	2	4
Coordination (work together)	0	0	0
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	0	0	0
B. Local Child Care Providers			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	1	3	4
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	2	2	4
Coordination (work together)	1	1	2
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	0	1	1
C. Military, Family, Community Network			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	2	4	6
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	2	3	5
Coordination (work together)	0	0	0
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	0	0	0
D. Community Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies			
No Working Relationship (little/no contact)	1	2	3
Cooperation (exchange info/referrals)	2	2	4
Coordination (work together)	0	0	0
Collaboration (share resources/ agreements)	1	3	4
Other (Please Specify_____)			3
Last year, we had some meetings with State of Vermont's Child Care Liaison for Military Families. We were invited to their trainings, but were unable to attend due to our federal monitoring review. We have not pursued this further as there was not a demonstrated need in our community assessment.	1	1	2
We do not have any families in the military, but if we did, we would have more involvement.	1	0	1

In Figure 20, Not Applicable was the predominant response from the Head Start and Early Head Start grantees because six or more of 11 Head Start Early Head Start grantees rated their *Degree of Difficulty* as Not Applicable to engage with their partners in seven of seven activities to coordinate services for children and their family members who are in the military (see the rows and boxes highlighted in yellow in Figure 20). Meanwhile, one Head Start grantee and one Early Head Start grantee rated as Difficult their abilities to engage with their partners in:

- Sharing data/information with organizations that are jointly serving children and their family members who are in the military (e.g. child development assessment data, family support services accessed, etc.) and
- Assisting families to access child care services on weekends and evenings (see the rows and boxes highlighted in yellow in Figure 20).

Two of 11 Head Start and Early Head Start grantees responded knowing a child care provider that offers services on weekends or at night. This is important for National Guard members who train during these times.

Figure 20: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees to Engage in Activities for Military Families

Ranking Military Families Activities	Early Head Start	Head Start	Total Early Head Start and Head Start
A. Establishing partnerships with key providers supporting military families and their unique needs			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	1	1	2
Not at All Difficult	0	0	0
Not Applicable	3	6	9
B. Coordinating services with providers for military families and their children			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	1	1	2
Not at All Difficult	0	0	0
Not Applicable	3	6	9
C. Supporting the referral process for military families and their children			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	0	0	0
Not at All Difficult	1	2	3
Not Applicable	3	5	8
D. Sharing data/information with organizations that are jointly serving children and their family members who are in the military (e.g. child development assessment data, family support services			

Figure 20: Degree of Difficulty for Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees to Engage in Activities for Military Families			
Ranking Military Families Activities	**Early Head Start**	**Head Start**	**Total Early Head Start and Head Start**
accessed, etc.)			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	1	1	2
Somewhat Difficult	0	0	0
Not at All Difficult	0	0	0
Not Applicable	3	6	9
E. Exchanging information on roles and resources with other providers/organizations regarding services for children of military families			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	1	2	3
Not at All Difficult	1	1	2
Not Applicable	2	4	6
F. Assisting families to access child care services on weekends and evenings			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	1	1	2
Somewhat Difficult	0	0	0
Not at All Difficult	1	0	1
Not Applicable	2	6	8
G. Facilitating shared training and technical assistance opportunities in the community to support military families			
Extremely Difficult	0	0	0
Difficult	0	0	0
Somewhat Difficult	1	1	2
Not at All Difficult	2	1	3
Not Applicable	1	5	6

Conclusion

Collaboration Strengths and Needs

The 2012-2013 needs assessment survey findings revealed Collaboration Strengths and Collaboration Needs between Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and their federal, state, community, and local partners in eight of 11 HSSCO Priority Areas:

- Child Care;
- Education (School Readiness, Head Start – Pre-K Partnership Development, and Partnerships with Local Education Agencies);
- School Transitions and Alignment with Kindergarten through Grade 12;
- Services for Children with Disabilities;
- Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness;
- Professional Development;
- Early Childhood Systems; and
- Community Services: Services for Military Families.

From analyzing the web survey data, five of eight HSSCO Priority Areas covered in this report were identified to have higher proportions of Collaboration Strengths than Collaboration Needs:

- Education (School Readiness, Head Start – Pre-K Partnership Development, and Partnerships with Local Education Agencies): 100 percent higher;
- Early Childhood Systems: 58 percent higher;
- Child Care: 54 percent higher;
- School Transitions and Alignment with Kindergarten through Grade Twelve: 39 percent higher; and
- Services for Children with Disabilities: 17 percent higher.

Three of eight HSSCO Priority Areas had lower proportions of Collaboration Strengths than Collaboration Needs:

- Community Services: Services for Military Families: 100 percent lower;
- Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness: 33 percent lower; and
- Professional Development: 11 percent lower.

VHSSCO's Third Year Work Plan

To build upon the Collaboration Strengths and address Collaboration Needs identified from the 2012-2013 needs assessment survey findings, the VHSSCO used these findings to update the VHSSCO's Third Year (September 30, 2014 – September 29, 2015) Work Plan of the VHSSCO Five-Year Strategic Plan (September 30, 2012 – September 29, 2017). In producing the Third Year Work Plan, the VHSSCO also considered external factors including:

- OHS priorities for the VHSSCO;
- Restoration of sequestered federal dollars to the VHSSCO and Head Start and Early Head Start grantees;
- Award of the federal $36.9 million Race-To-the-Top: Early Learning Challenge grant to the State of Vermont and its systems projects relevant to the work performed by Head Start and Early Head Start grantees;
- Governor's Early Childhood Action Plan;
- Enactment of Act 166 making available universal pre-kindergarten education to three-, four-, and non-kindergarten ready five-year-olds in Vermont; and
- Input of the Vermont Head Start Association.

The VHSSCO submitted its third year work plan on June 30, 2014, and the federal Region I -- OHS approved it on August 19, 2014.

Dissemination of Report to Strengthen Collaboration

The VHSSCO will share the results of this report publicly particularly with stakeholders, including VHSA; the Child Development Division, Department for Children and Families, Agency of Human Services; Agency of Education; and the BBF State Advisory Council, Inc. Through this process, the collaboration, coordination, and alignment of services, curricula, standards, and/or assessments between Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and their partners will be strengthened for the benefit of young children and their families in Vermont.

Appendix A

Head Start and Early Head Start State Programs

Deborah Gass, Director
Early Education Services/Windham County, (Brattleboro Town School District)
130 Birge St.
Brattleboro, VT 05301
802/254-3742 ext. 110
Counties Served: Windham
Towns/Cities Served: Athens, Brattleboro, Brookline, Dover, Dummerston, Grafton, Guilford, Halifax, Jamaica, Londonderry, Marlboro, Newfane, Putney, Rockingham, Somerset, Stratton, Townshend, Wardsboro, Westminister, Whitingham, Wilmington, Windham, Vernon

Marianne Miller, Director
Capstone Community Action Head Start, (Capstone Community Action)
20 Gable Place
Barre, VT 05641
802/479-1053, 800/639-1053
Counties Served: Lamoille, Orange, Washington
Towns/Cities Served: Belvidere, Eden, Hyde Park, Wolcott Elmore, Waterville, Johnson, Morristown, Cambridge, Jeffersonville, Stowe, Orange, Topsham, Newbury, Wells River, Williamstown, Washington, Corinth, Bradford, Brookfield, Chelsea, Vershire, W. Fairlee, Fairlee, Braintree, Randolph, Tunbridge, Strafford, Thetford, Post Mills, Waits River, Woodbury, Cabot, Worcester, Calais, Marshfield, Waterbury, Middlesex, Montpelier, E. Montpelier, Plainfield, Duxbury, Moretown, Berlin, Riverton, Barre City, Fayston, Waitsfield, Northfield, Warren, Roxbury

Paul Behrman, Director
Champlain Valley Head Start, (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity)
431 Pine St.
Burlington, VT 05401
802/651-4180
Counties Served: Addison, Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle
Towns/Cities Served: Bridgeport, Orwell, Shoram, Lester, Whiting, Middlebury, Rochester, Hancock, Salisbury, Bristol, Monkton, Starksboro, Lincoln, Vergennes, Colchester, Hinesburg, Huntington, Richmond, St. George, S. Burlington, Essex Ctr, Westford, Winooski, Bakersfield, E. Fairfield, St. Albans, Swanton, Richford, Berkshire, Highgate, Milton, Alburg, South Hero

Linda Michniewicz, Director
NEKCA/Child & Family Development Program, (Northeast Kingdom Community Action, Inc.)
191 High St.
Barton, VT 05822
802/525-3362
Counties Served: Essex, Orleans, Caledonia
Towns/Cities Served: Jay, Westfield, Troy, Newport City, Irasburg, Derby, Holland, Norton, Caanan, Averill, Lemington, Lewis, Morgan, Charleston, Coventry, Lowell, Barton, Brighton, Bloomfield, Albany, Westmore, Brunswick, Ferdinand, Maidstone, Newark, Sutton, Glover, Craftsbury, Greensboro, Sheffield, E. Haven, Wheelock, Lyndon, Stannard, Hardwick, Victory, Granby, Guildhall, Walden, Danville, St. Johnsbury, Kirby, Lunenburg, Concord, Waterford, Peacham, Barnet, Gorton

Dick Courcelle, Director
Rutland County Head Start, (Rutland Community Programs, Inc.)
Box 222
Rutland, VT 05702
802/775-8225
Counties Served: Rutland
Towns/Cities Served: Wallingford, Danby, Clarendon, Pawlet, Shrewsbury, Poultney, Benson, Castleton, Fair Haven, West Rutland, Proctor, Pittsford, Brandon, Rutland City, Rutland Town, Sudbury, Hubbardton, Chittenden, W. Haven

Lori Canfield, Director
SEVCA/Windsor County Head Start, (Southeastern Vermont Community Action)
107 Park Street
Springfield, VT 05156
802/885-6669
Counties Served: Windsor
Towns/Cities Served: Springfield, Windsor, Hartford, Hartland, Royalton, South Royalton, Chester, White River Junction

Betsy Rathbun-Gunn, Director
Bennington County Head Start, (United Children's Service of Bennington County)
P.O. Box 588
Bennington, VT 05201
802/442-3686
Counties Served: Bennington
Towns/Cities Served: Manchester, Dorset, Sunderland, Arlington, Pownal, Bennington, N. Bennington, Shaftsbury, Woodford, Sandgate

Appendix B

References

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