

# Implementation of Education and Advocacy Resources for Head Start Teachers, Staff, and Parents

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## Goals

1. Create and update existing toolkit materials for Head Start teachers and parents
2. Collaborate with Head Start policy partners and parent advisory boards
3. Develop a dissemination and implementation plan for toolkit materials

## Methods

- Collaborated with Head Start policy partners to obtain staff feedback on the materials and developed a plan for toolkit dissemination
- Updated developmental toolkit materials based on feedback with an initial focus on revising and disseminating the activities handouts section of the toolkit
- Created an instructional YouTube video for Head Start staff on how to use the activities handouts
- Met with the Head Start parent advisory board to obtain feedback regarding toolkit implementation strategies and additional parental suggestions for future projects
- Surveyed Head Start teachers and policy partners on the use and implementation of the activities handouts

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- Community Action Agency/ Cincinnati Head Start – Zachary Kinnett and Abigail Foltz Hottle
- Head Start, Parent Advisory Boards

\*At-promise is a term used to replace the term “at-risk” to instill hope for the child’s future

## Background

- Children in poverty are 40 to 60% more likely to have developmental delays
- African American and Latinx children are diagnosed with developmental disabilities two years later than non-minority children
- Early diagnosis and treatment improves child outcomes in long-term development and academics
- Head Start provides early education for low-income families and their children from birth to age five funded by the Ohio Department of Education
  - Uniquely poised to enrich the development of children at-promise\* and to connect children to services

## Toolkit Materials

### ACTIVITIES HANDOUTS

- Provide caregivers with activities to practice with their children for skill development
- Each domain has its own handout
  - Speech/language, fine motor, gross motor, problem solving
- Activities are based on developmental milestones for children 1 through 4 years of age

### EVALUATION HANDOUTS

- Describe the role of different health care providers in supporting the child and family
- Explain the process and what to expect once a child is referred for an evaluation to:
  - psychology
  - physical therapy
  - speech language therapy
  - occupational therapy

### OTHER HANDOUTS

- Provide information on advocacy skills
- Offer strategies to improve behavior and increase motivation to practice skill development
- Increase families’ awareness of the role of social workers to assist families with navigating health care and school systems
- Define common medical terms

Language Activities Handout  
3-year-old skills

Language activities focus on what children say and how they listen. Developing language skills helps a child understand directions, get his/her needs met, and make friends.

Language Activities to Practice:

- Point to or name body parts
- Follow two different instructions: “I’ll get your shoes and I’ll throw this away”
- Pointing to or naming common objects (cat, dog, ball, etc.)
- Use action words to describe activities: “The dog is barking”
- Have your child practice using their first and last name
- Teach opposites like “big and small”
- Use sentences with 3-4 words  
Model by talking about things you see using describing words “the ball is red”
- Teach direction words using small toys like “on top”, “under”, or “next to”
- Use pronouns (his, hers, theirs, mine, etc): “That is mine” or “that is his ball” or “I did it!” or “I want \_\_\_”



Instructional YouTube video

Toolkit Materials



Poster QR Code

## Results

- Qualitative feedback
- Teachers reported the toolkit materials were beneficial to guide conversation in parent-teacher conferences and for monitoring developmental progress
  - Parents reported the toolkit materials could be helpful to promote developmental skills at home
  - Both teachers and parents reported the need to streamline materials to avoid duplication
  - Requested survey data for use of toolkit materials by teachers, but no responses despite offer for monetary compensation

## Discussion

- Toolkits have been well received by policy partners and parents
- Due to competing priorities secondary to the COVID-19 pandemic, toolkit material distribution was reduced
- Meetings with parent council revealed concern for challenging behaviors and lack of social skills. These areas should be added to toolkit in the future.

## Next Steps

- Obtain additional feedback on toolkit handouts from Head Start teachers and parents via in-person meetings and online surveys
- Translate toolkit materials into other commonly used languages
- Create supplemental videos to enhance toolkit materials use
- Obtain information on other opportunities to collaborate with Head Start to promote partnership between Head Start and the healthcare system
- Discuss materials currently used by Head Start teachers and parents to eliminate duplicative materials
- Develop materials for parents to understand the IEP/504 process