

SD HEAD START COLLABORATION OFFICE NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESULTS 2023



south dakota
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Learning. Leadership. Service.

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PURPOSE OF THE SD HEAD START COLLABORATION OFFICE

Assist Head Start Grantees in enhancing school readiness including promoting alignment of child outcomes, birth to Kindergarten.

Enable Head Start Grantees to better access Professional Development opportunities in South Dakota.

SD Head Start
Collaboration
Office

Promote better linkages between Head Start Grantees and other child and family agencies.

Build partnerships with local and statewide stakeholders to better meet the needs of low-income children, birth to school entry, and their families.

SD Head Start
Grantees

SD Local and
Statewide
Stakeholders

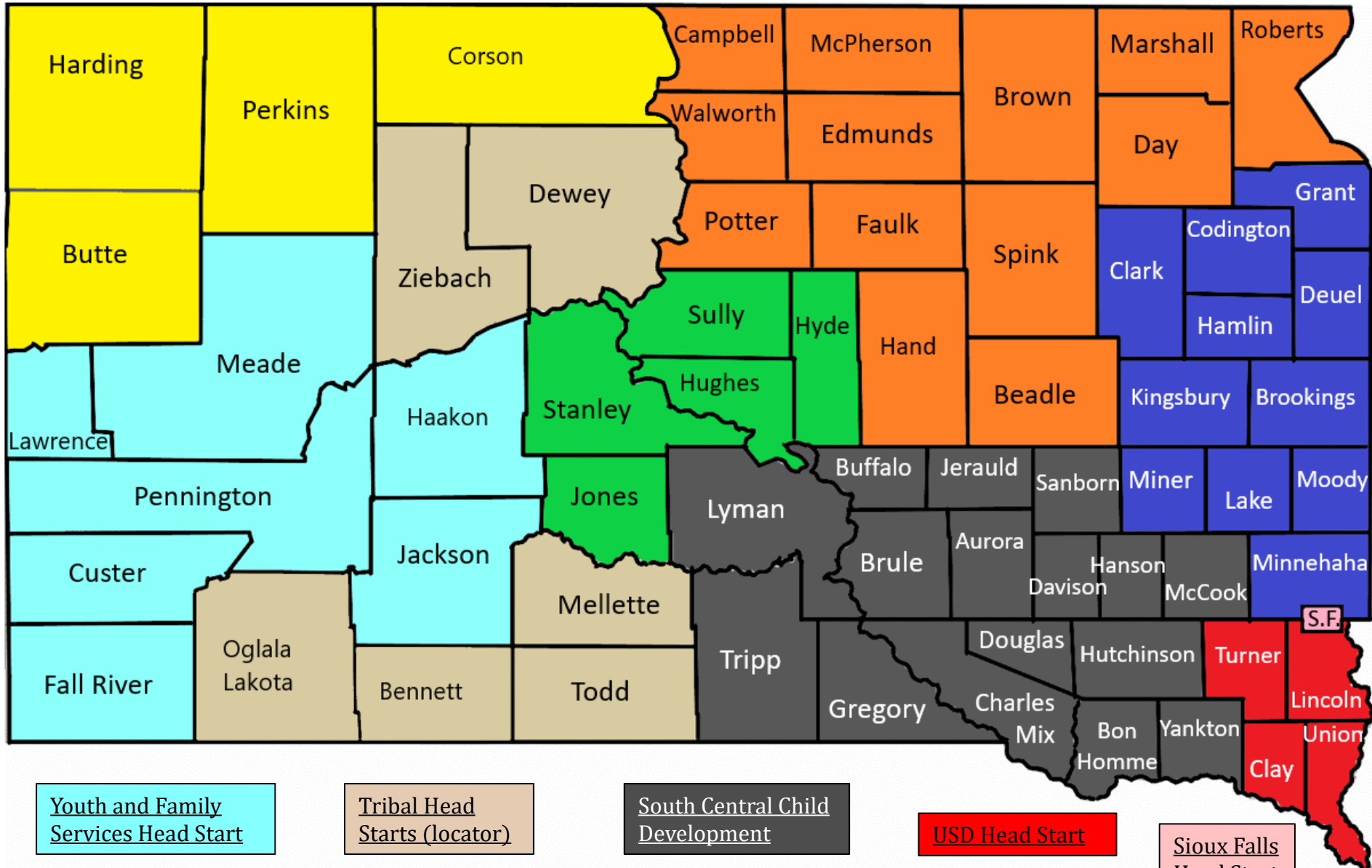
Establish collaborative relationships and partnerships with agencies that provide services to children and families of low income in health, mental health, disabilities, child welfare and family services.

TREC-Badlands
Head Start

Oahe Child
Development Center

Northeast SD
Head Start

Inter-Lakes
Head Start



Youth and Family
Services Head Start

Tribal Head
Starts (locator)

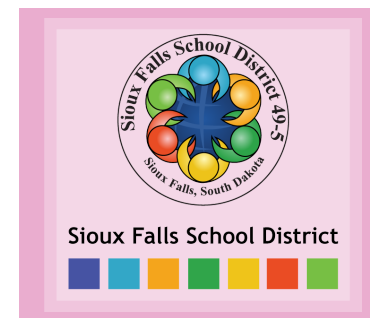
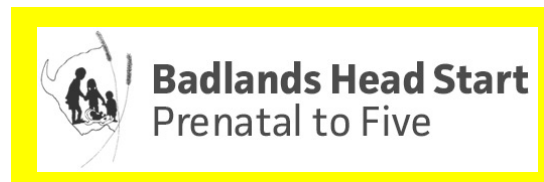
South Central Child
Development

USD Head Start

Sioux Falls
Head Start

Region VIII SD Head Start Grantees

- Executive Directors/Assistant Directors/Program Directors
- Lead Service Area Managers
- Education Managers or Coordinators, Site Managers
- Coaches
- Disabilities Staff
- Mental Health /Behavioral Health Managers/Specialists
- Family Services Specialists/Workers
- Health & Safety Staff
- Nutrition Staff
- Education Staff: Teachers, Teacher Assistants, Home Visitors, Subs
- Support Staff: HR, Transportation, Administrative, Fiscal/Accounting, Maintenance/Custodian, Office Staff,
- Data Encoder



- Focus on collaboration between Head Start grantees and statewide agencies or programs offering services to children and families
- Focus on Professional Development
- Focus on the role of the SD Collaboration Office

Head Start programs prepare America's most vulnerable young children to succeed in school and in life beyond school. Focusing on the whole child, programs deliver services to pregnant women to children birth to age 5 **AND** their families in education & child development, health, mental health, nutrition, family well-being, family engagement & partnerships, community partnerships, services for children with disabilities, and transition services.

All Grantees follow Head Start Performance Standards that are for each "component area". For example, the Director will work more with policies and program governance, Health & Safety Specialist's duties will focus on health status and care and oral practices, Family Service Specialists focus on family and community partnerships, etc.

Since most program staff will include those who do *not* necessarily work directly with children, they will have connections to other agencies within their community and/or statewide in order to help meet the needs of the child and their families.

Education staff, however, work directly with children either in a classroom setting or during home visits and may not have as much collaboration. Based on this, the survey asked questions about their level of *familiarity* instead of their collaboration levels to local or statewide agencies.

Description of Services

Grantee Survey Results

South Central
Child
Development
38%

Inter-Lakes
36%

Oahe Child
Development
Center
35%

What Head Start
program do you
provide services at?
(Survey return rate)

Northeast Head
Start
63%

Badlands
45%

USD Head Start
25%

Youth & Family
Services
12%

Sioux Falls Head
Start
6%

What position best describes you?

Classroom Teacher (Head Start or Early Head Start) – 26%
Classroom Assistant, Sub, Floater – 15%
Home Visitor (Head Start or Early Head Start) – 10%

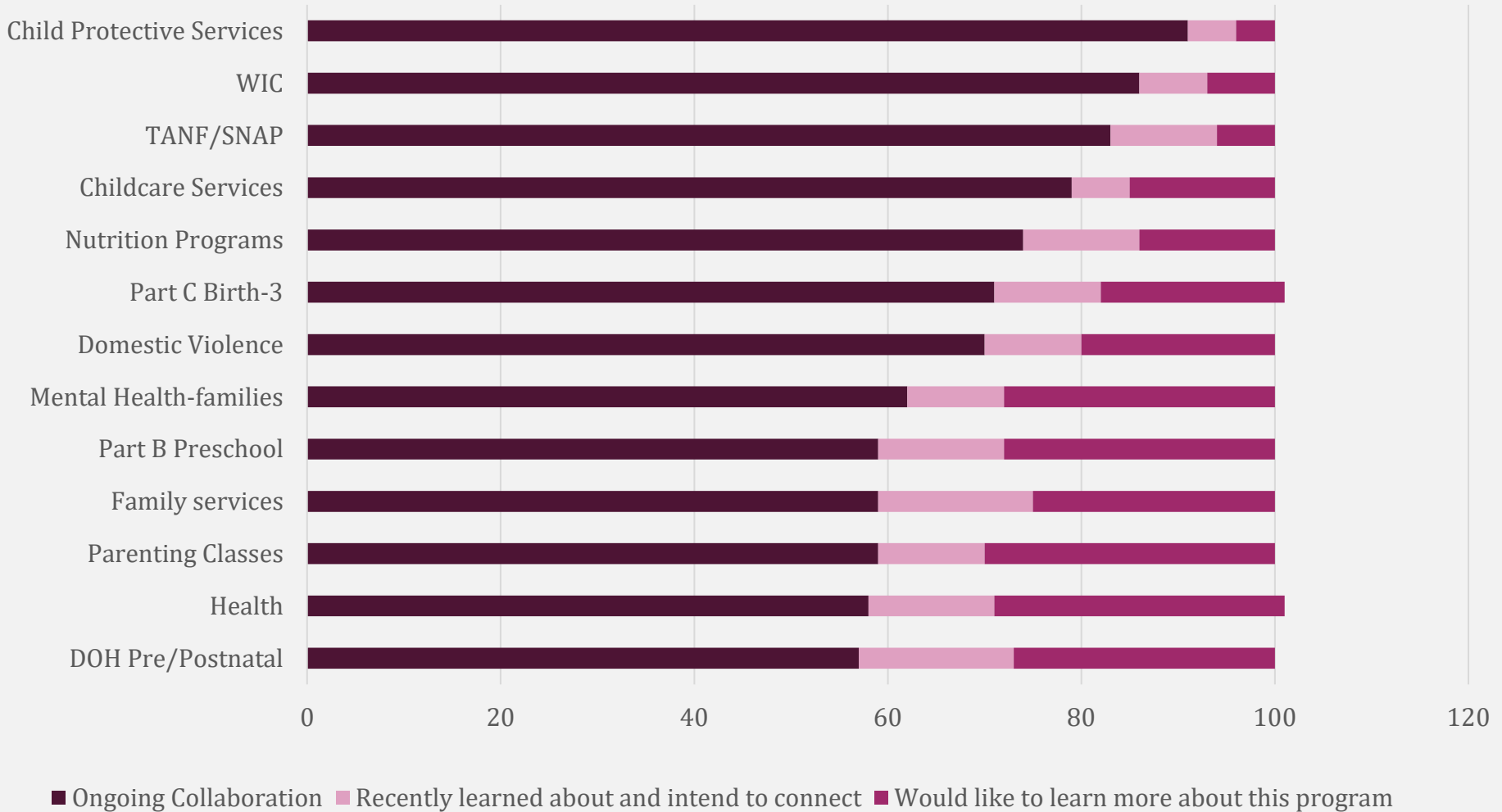
Coach (for ed. staff) – 2%
Data Encoder – 1%
Other (school age) – <1%

Executive, Assistant, or
Program Director – 5%
Support Staff (office, admin.,
HR, fiscal, maintenance) – 10%

Education or Site Manager or
Coordinator – 7%
Disabilities Staff – 1%
Family Services Spec./Worker –
14%

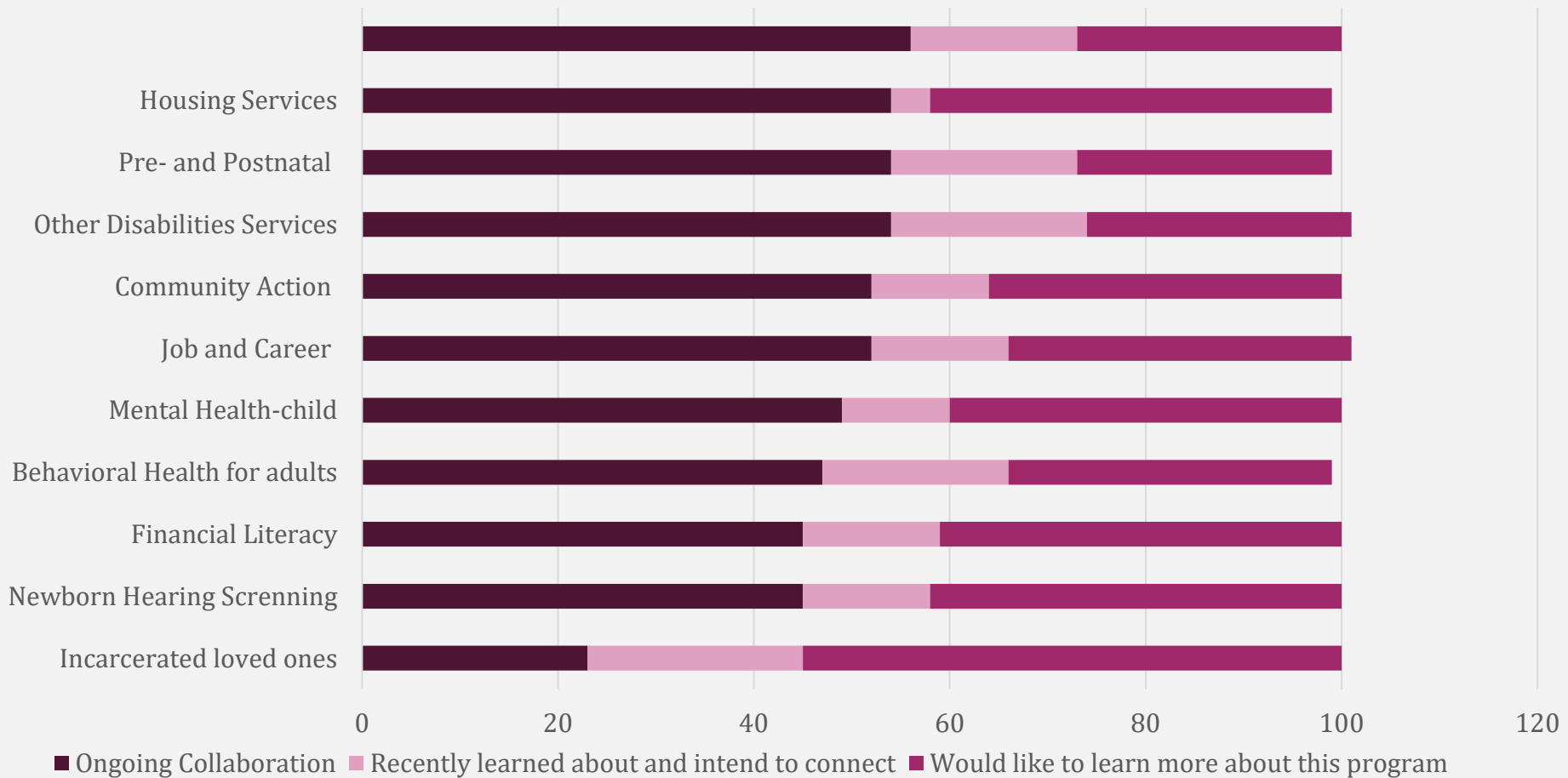
Health & Safety Staff – 3%
Nutrition Staff – 2%
Mental Health or Behavioral
Health – 1%

Grantee collaboration with statewide and/or local programs



Out of 114 responses, the highest collaboration with statewide and/or local programs ranged from 58% to 88%. This graph represents directors, specialists or managers, and home visitors. Home visitors work closely with families to help meet their goals by utilizing statewide and local organizations.

Grantee collaboration with statewide and/or local programs cont.



Out of 114 responses, lower collaboration with statewide and/or local programs ranged from 55% to 23%. This graph represents directors, specialists or managers, and home visitors. Home visitors work closely with families to help meet their goals by utilizing statewide and local organizations. Notably, staff would like to learn more about these programs.

Collaboration between Head Start Grantees and statewide and/or local programs

The South Dakota Head Starts have *high* collaboration and/or connection with statewide entities: (% of staff)

- Department of Social Services
 - Child Protective Services (CPS office locations) and signs of child abuse, etc. (91%)
 - TANF/SNAP for recruitment (83%)
 - Childcare Licensing, Subsidy, Child Support, Childcare Assistance, Childcare Listings in Head Start service areas (79%)
- Department of Health
 - WIC Offices (86%)
 - Prenatal services, Bright Start home visiting program (57%)
- Department of Education
 - Part C Services (Birth to Three Early Intervention) (71%)
 - Part B Services (Preschool Special Education) (59%)
 - Child and Adult Nutrition Services (58%)

The South Dakota Head Starts have *high* collaboration and/or connection with local entities:

- Nutrition Services (80%)
 - Food Pantries
- Domestic Violence Programs (70%)
 - Local shelters/centers
 - Statewide support
- Mental Health programs - services to families (62%)
- Family Services (59%)
 - Lutheran Social Services, United Ways, etc.
 - Clothing, household items, food, etc.
- Parenting Classes (59%)
 - Common Sense Parenting and/or Responsive Parenting
- Pre- and -Postnatal Services (54%)

The South Dakota Head Starts would like to learn more about the following services from local and/or statewide programs:

- Support for families of incarcerated loved ones, re-entry into society, etc. (55%)
- Newborn Hearing Screenings (42%)
- Programs offering Financial Literacy such as basic money management, family finances, etc. (41%)
- Housing Services such as rental properties and/or housing assistance (41%)
- Mental Health programs that offer play therapy or sand therapy for young children (40%)
- Community Action Programs: GROW SD, Inter-Lakes, Rural Office of Community and Western SD Community (36%)
- Programs that offer job and career skills, resume writing, job search, interviewing skills, etc. (35%)
- Behavioral Health such as substance prevention/treatment, suicide prevention, etc. (33%)
- Other Health programs (30%)
- Common Sense/Responsive Parenting Programs (30%)

How do you participate in the following activities/events?

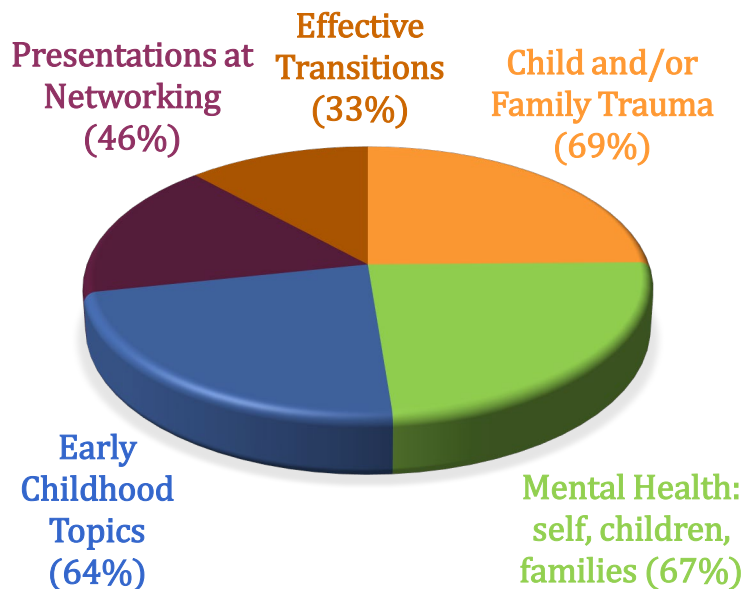


	Transition from Early Head Start to Head Start or another early childhood program (classroom visits, transition parent meetings)	Kindergarten Transitions (classroom visits, meetings with school district staff, shared transition events with district)	Kindergarten Screenings (Health and Developmental)	Child Find Screenings (not including Kindergarten screenings)	Attending an IFSP or IEP when invited
I am an active participant	72%	68%	54%	66%	66%
I participate, but not consistently	22%	25%	36%	23%	22%
I would like to be more involved	6%	7%	10%	11%	12%

170 people responded to this question regarding transitions, screenings and IFSP/IEP participation. 53 of these were teachers, 28 were family services workers, 20 of them were home visitors (EHS and/or HS), 18 were education and/or disabilities managers, and 11 of them were directors or program assistants. When broken down by position; teachers, home visitors, family service workers, and education managers had the most participation in transitions. Disabilities Specialists and Health & Safety Specialists participated more in screenings. Many teachers and home visitors will accompany the disabilities staff to attend an IFSP or an IEP meeting for the children on their case loads. The rest of the respondents did not participate due to their position at Head Start.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

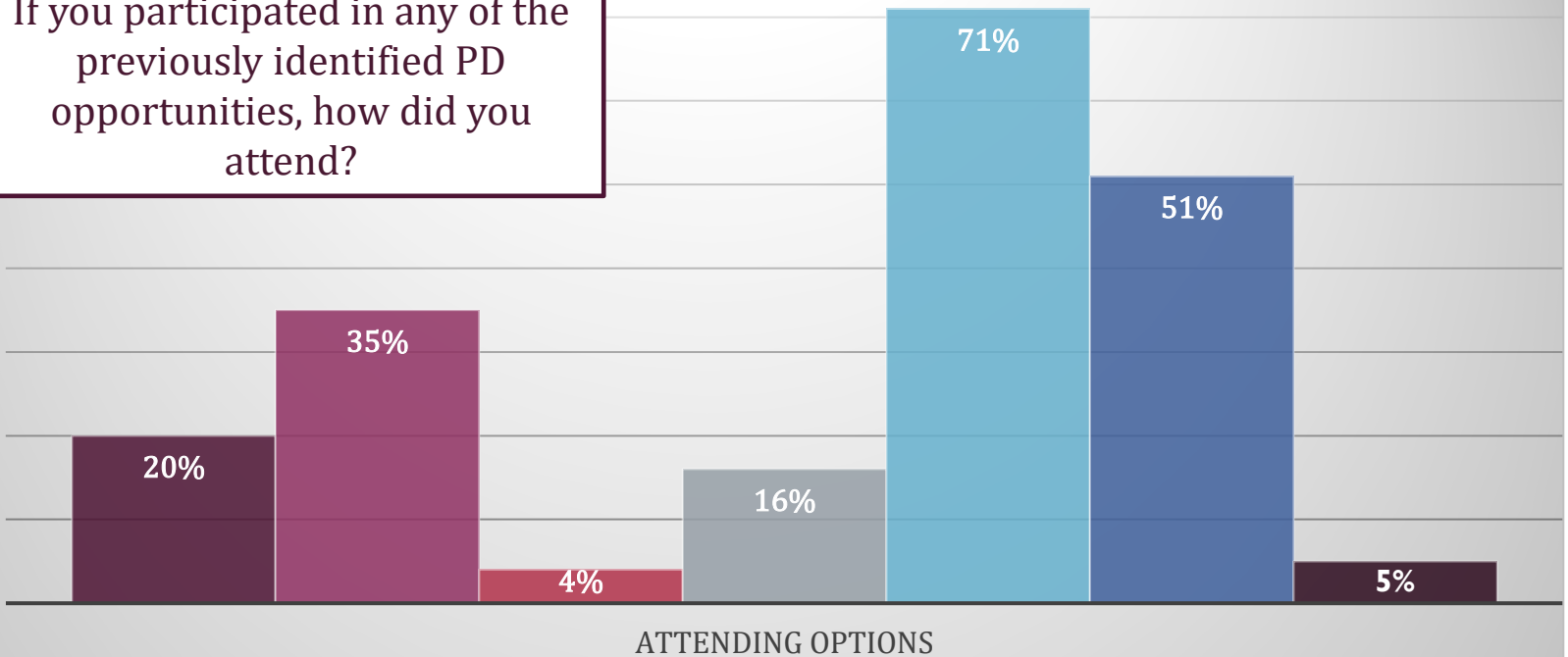
Top 5 PD staff attended prior to March 2022



PD staff attended prior to March 2023	
Early Childhood Topics	68%
Mental Health: self, children, families	58%
Child and/or Family Trauma	57%
Health topics: prenatal, oral health, nutrition, safety, etc.	47%
Disabilities: inclusion, intervention, Part C, Part B, IFSP/IEP	26%
Substance Misuse: informative, prevention, treatment, SCOPE/ECHO	19%
Did not attend any PD this past year	13%
Other to include fiscal, new hire PD, HR, Leadership, PIR, ERSEA	5%

As notable in the charts, the top three trainings attended by staff in 2022 and again in 2023 are Early Childhood Topics, Mental Health, and Child and/or Family Trauma. Early childhood topics can include supervision, curriculum, environments, development, teaching practices, etc. These topics continue to be related to those working directly with the overall well-being of the child and the effects they have on families.

If you participated in any of the previously identified PD opportunities, how did you attend?



- Online credit, CEU, contact hrs.
- SD Conference
- In-house/in-person
- Networking
- My program brought in training
- Webinar/Virtual
- National Conference

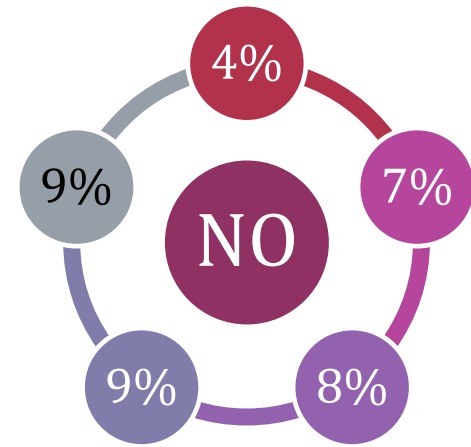
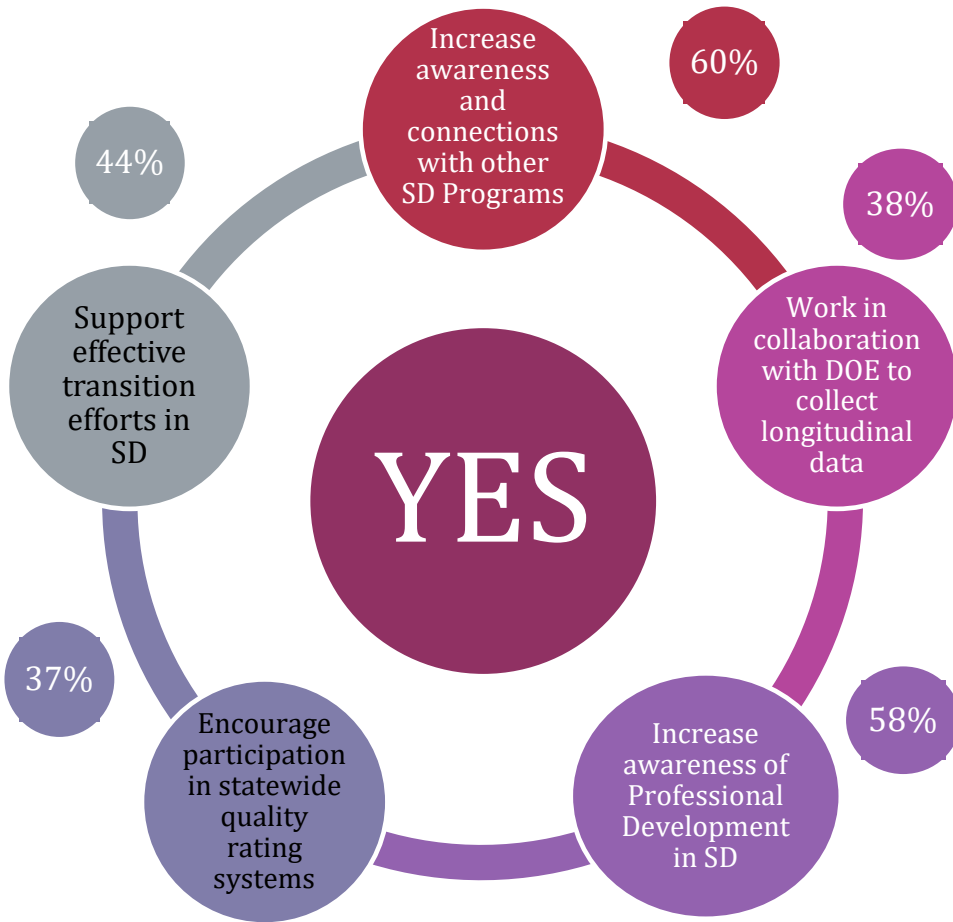
189 staff responded to the variety of ways they have attended professional development within the last year. Staff have other opportunities to build their professional development throughout the program year. 71% of grantee staff stated their programs hosted trainings at their service sites. This is often done so all staff members can attend without disruption of daily operations with children and families. Taking online classes, attending webinars or virtual trainings can also be done without interrupting work time. Although National Conferences are offered throughout the program year, only 5% of respondents attended these.

WHAT OTHER TRAININGS, WEBINARS, PRESENTATIONS WOULD YOU LIKE TO ATTEND?

Although only 64 people responded on this open-comment question about their interest in PD topics, many answers included more than one interest for professional development. These have been divided by a common Head Start or early childhood related focus to obtain a percentage.

Behavioral health for children	17%
Working with children with disabilities	16%
Early childhood topics (no specific topics mentioned)	13%
Classroom and home visiting topics (curriculum, teaching practices, infant/toddler, safety)	13%
Mental health for children	11%
ACEs and/or trauma	9%
Conscious Discipline	8%
Substance Misuse (signs, prevention, treatment)	8%
Attend a National Conference	8%
None or N/A	8%
Support for families: anything to help families, homelessness, parent engagement	6%
Staff wellness (morale, retention)	6%
Anything related to my position	6%
Coaching (helping teachers and home visitors)	6%
Mental health for families	5%
Anything related to health	3%
Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA)	3%
Infinite Campus (SD Data System)	2%
Computer topics	2%
Nutrition (Child and Adult Care Food Program)	2%
Transition to kindergarten	2%

As noticeable in the above figure, the first seven topics are related to working with the child in development, behaviors, mental health, trauma, and discipline. The other topics of interest focus on helping and supporting families and topics as a staff member.



209 staff responded to the question of the five topics related to the Head Start Collaboration Office goals. The Collaboration Director has ongoing interactions and connections with program directors, managers and/or specialists. Any information given to directors, manager, or specialists should trickle down to all other staff in the program. An average of 109 (over 50%) respondents were unaware due to their position in the program. When diving deeper into the “unaware” respondents, these consisted of teachers, aides, home visitors, and support staff.

TO MY KNOWLEDGE, THE HEAD START COLLABORATION DIRECTOR HAS HELPED MYSELF OR MY PROGRAM IN:

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU FEEL THE SD HEAD START COLLABORATION DIRECTOR DOES THAT HELPS SUPPORT YOU OR YOUR PROGRAM'S COLLABORATION?

"Keeping us aware of PD through OHS."

Lead Area Services Mgr.

"Connections have been great."

Health & Safety Mgr.

"Keeps us update on changes made/upcoming changes from DOE, passes on or develops resources, surveys and sets up training needed."

Education Mgr./Coord./Site Mgr.

"Provide statewide stakeholders for networking meetings."

Family Service Mgr./Spec./Coord.

"Giving us the Head Start Crosswalk."

Center-Based Teacher

"Provided opportunities to link in the community leaders and SD Head Start training opportunities through board meetings and conferences."

Development Specialist

"Keeps us informed of relevant resources or trainings."

Education Mgr./Coord./Site Mgr.

"Provides TANF/SNAP lists to our program."

Family Service Mgr./Spec./Coord.

"I enjoy the network opportunities offered."

Coach

"Provides new agencies at networking."

Health & Safety Mgr./Spec.

"The collab office is networked well with a wide variety of stakeholders. This enables them to propose options and solutions to local programs."

Executive Director/Program Director/Assistant Director

"I appreciate the strong connection with the DOE and support provided not only to programs – but also to the SDHSA. I feel the Collaboration Director passes on information in a timely manner that may be of interest in Head Start programs."

Executive Director/Program Director/Assistant Director

"I don't really know much about your director, other than I assume that is where our program director and other support staff get information for us. I feel they keep us in the know."

Home Visitor

38 staff members responded. 12 were unsure who the collaboration director was and 8 did not need any support at this time. All other respondents commented on their program director and not the SD Head Start Collaboration Director.

What would you like to see the SD Head start collaboration director do more of to increase your collaboration with other agencies?

*"Keep us connected with statewide agencies."
Health & Safety Mgr./Spec.*

*"Updated statewide agreements and meetings
with B-3/PS/Kindergarten."
Education Mgr./Coord./Site Mgr.*

*"Any resources on
coaching."
Coach*

*"Same as doing"
Lead Area Service Manager*

*"Meet with us face-to-face and talk to us
during agency wide trainings."
Center-Based Teacher*

*"Keep up the good work."
Health & Safety Specialist*

*"More networking, conferences with easier access
(more parts of the state, day conference, etc.)."
Center-Based Teacher*

*"It's all good. When we need,
we just ask. Thank you."
Home Visitor*

*"I know that I can contact her if I need
to."
Family Service Mgr./Spec./Coord.*

*"Keep us in the loop of educational things"
2 Center-Based Teachers*

*"Just keep us updated as needed."
Education Mgr./Coord./Site Mgr.*

*"I would like to continue to work with the SDHSCO on data reports on the
Infinite Campus system. I also see a need for more Head Start
involvement with the development of the QRIS in our state."
Executive Director/Program Director/Assistant Director*

*"Keep letting us know about transition."
Center-Based Teacher*

41 staff members responded. 8 were unsure and 5 did not need any support at this time. All other respondents commented about their program director and not the Head Start Collaboration Office Director.

Statewide/Local Collaboration

Findings

South Dakota Head Starts have high collaboration and relationships with many statewide agencies. Collaboration is done during recruitment, enrollment, and ongoing services. The following State Departments and Head Start programs have continuing relationships to ensure services are being completed and the needs of children and families are being met.

- Department of Social Services: Child Welfare services, Foster Children, Childcare Services
- Department of Education: Early Intervention, Special Education, Nutrition Programs
- Department of Health: WIC Services, prenatal services

Program specialists/managers will have unique connections with local organizations depending on the role they play. For example, Family Service Specialists will work more directly with families and therefore have connections with programs that may provide food, clothing, transportation, jobs, etc. Health and Safety Specialists may have more connections with local clinics, oral health programs, or prenatal programs. Disabilities Specialists will have relationships with the local school districts.

Actions

The 2023 Needs Assessment survey results help to measure and guide the work of the SD Collaboration Office in supporting the priorities of the Office of Head Start. When building upon collaborative relationships between Head Start and local and statewide agencies, programs are better supported. Connecting with similar statewide entities can help ensure children are school ready and families can get their needs met while also reaching their goals.



Statewide/Local Collaboration Findings and Actions

Findings cont.

Several statewide services were of interest to staff that participate in Grantee/Stakeholder meetings. The following component staff positions attend these meetings when applicable:

- Directors
- Education Managers/Specialists/Coordinators
- Disabilities Specialists
- Health and Safety Specialists
- Mental Health or Behavioral Health Specialists
- Nutrition Specialists
- Family Service Specialists/Coordinators
- Fiscal Specialists
- Coaches

Between 28% and 57% of staff responded to wanting more information on specific agencies or programs that can support Head Start children and families.

Actions cont.

As a result of these percentages, the SD Head Start Collaboration Office (SD HSCO) and the SD Head Start Association Office work together to schedule local or statewide stakeholders to attend the Grantee/Stakeholder meetings held every other month. Stakeholders provide information and/or short training for staff during these meetings. The new program year for these meetings will begin September 2023.

The SD HSCO will reach out to stakeholders for potential scheduling of the topics of interest from the list on page 12 of this document.

Stakeholders are asked to present information about their program and how it can also benefit the children and/or families enrolled in Head Start. They also share contact information and relevant resources for staff to utilize for their families. This allows for programs to collaborate with stakeholders in the future.



School District Collaboration Findings and Actions

Findings

A high percentage of Head Starts have the relationships needed to ensure effective transitions can occur. Although several staff members will take part in the transition process for children, when the survey results were broken down by position, 100% of home visitors were active participants for children who could possibly be eligible for Head Start. 67% of teachers are active participants in the transition process for children who are eligible for Kindergarten.

Over half of Head Start staff respondents participate in child screenings. As stated previously in this document, the survey included Kindergarten screenings to include both health and development. Health and Safety Specialists, Disabilities Specialists, and other appropriate staff, along with district staff, will complete the kindergarten screenings. These screenings occur toward the end of each school year.

Although similar, Child Find screenings are focused more on newborn children to those children not necessarily attending kindergarten. These are offered throughout the year specialists and staff participate when asked.

When broken down by position, the 66% of staff that responded to being an active participant for enrolled children on an IFSP or an IEP consisted largely of Center-Based Teachers (includes Early Head Start)(53%), Specialists (20%), and Home Visitors (both Head Start and Early Head Start)(18%).

Actions

When transitions are successful, children and families are more likely to experience better long-term school success. Every program year, several children “age out” of Early Head Start and *may* be eligible for Head Start or another preschool-age program. Over 1000 children per program year leave Head Start for Kindergarten or another pre-kindergarten program. During this transition process, staff work closely with their local districts and/or community programs to ensure children and families experience a smooth transition.

The SD HSCO provides support and resources in transition including the SD ELG – SD Kind. Standards – Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework Crosswalk. Each Head Start educator working with children 3-5 receives a complimentary copy. The Collaboration Director will continue to provide support and resources for staff participating in transition activities through representation at the SD Head Start Region VIII Conference held every October.

Professional Development Findings and Actions

Findings

The most common trainings that were attended by staff members in the past year were Early Childhood topics such as development of children, effective teaching practices, environments, curriculum, etc. Since over half of respondents were teachers, assistant teachers, home visitors, data shows support to the attendance in this category.

Mental Health, Child and Family Trauma were also of high attendance in the past year, followed by Health topics, Disabilities, and Substance Misuse.

When staff were asked to comment on future webinars, trainings, networking, etc. they would like to attend, the most mentioned was child behaviors, working with children who have disabilities, early childhood topics, mental health for children, child trauma, and curriculums that focus on discipline and social development and emotional development, and substance misuse such as signs, prevention and treatment of.

Actions

Through collaboration of the SD Head Start Collaboration Office (SD HSCO), SD Head Start Association and the SD Association for the Education of Young Children, Early Childhood Education Conference is held every spring. Head Start, childcare, family home, special education, parents, etc. are invited to attend this conference in the Spring.

During the fall of each program year, the Head Start Region VIII Conference is held. Although most topics are focused on Head Starts, any one in early childhood education can attend. Region VIII consists of Head Starts in the states of SD, North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Montana. Educators and parents of Head Start children from all states are invited to attend.

Both conferences offer subjects that are related to the early childhood field and can include, but are not limited to, child development, effective teaching, environments, supervision, mental health, trauma, behaviors, special education, transition, health, nutrition, staff wellness, etc.

The SD HSCO will continue to forward relevant training, including those specified in the 2023 needs assessment, opportunities to Head Start Grantees throughout the program year.



Collaboration Office

Questions 11 and 12 of the survey revolved around the SD Head Start Collaboration Director and participants were asked to type in a comment. 178 and 175 skipped these questions.

Thirty-eight people commented on question 11 and forty-one commented on question 12. While analyzing comments, it was discovered that many answers were directed toward the Grantee Head Start director and not about the collaboration director. The data would not be reliable in this report and were not included.

In the past years, the collaboration office needs assessment survey was given to all staff, including those that may not directly connect with the collaboration director. The SD Head Start Collaboration Office director works in partnership with Head Start directors and the specialists in the programs as they have a higher amount of knowledge of their communities.

The SD HSCO director feels the voice of educators and support staff are important and will evaluate future survey questions to ensure they are applicable to the respondents.

The collaboration director will continue to work with the SD Head Start directors in collaboration efforts and professional development opportunities at the State level.

