

South Dakota Head Start Collaboration Office Priorities, Goals, and Outcomes

Priority 1	Collaborate with state systems to align early care and education services and supports for children and families prenatally to age five.
Long-Range Goal	Foster partnerships among early childhood programs, state agencies, tribal organizations, and community stakeholders to create a cohesive system of care and education for children prenatal to age five.
Process Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish partnerships with key stakeholders, including state agencies, early care providers, educators, and community organizations. • Engage stakeholders in Head Start networking, professional development opportunities, conferences, and other Head Start lead activities.
Expected Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness, partnerships, and coordination among early childhood programs, state agencies, tribal organizations, and community organizations. • Streamlined service delivery reducing duplication of services, gaps in support, and creating a more seamless transition process for children as they age through prenatal to age five systems.

Priority 2	Work with state efforts to collect and use early childhood data to inform state plans, program policies, resource allocation, and continuous improvement across early childhood systems.
Long-Range Goal	Strengthen state-level data collection and utilization for early childhood programs, including Head Starts, to inform policy decisions, enhance program effectiveness, and improve child and family outcomes.
Process Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with state agencies and stakeholders on the development and integration of early childhood data systems to ensure Head Start programs have access to relevant data for program improvement and decision-making. • Focus efforts on partnerships, information sharing, and aligning Head Start data needs with existing and emerging state initiatives.
Expected Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved data-sharing pathways between Head Start programs and state agencies. Development of MOUs for data-sharing. • Greater alignment of Head Start data needs with existing and emerging state data. • Strengthened collaboration between SDHSCO early childhood stakeholders to support data-driven decision-making.

Priority 3	Support the expansion of and access to high quality workforce and career development opportunities for early childhood professionals, including Head Start.
Long-Range Goal	Support and enhance workforce development efforts for early childhood professionals, including Head Start, by collaborating with state agencies, higher education institutions, and other stakeholders to expand access to career pathways, training opportunities, and professional development resources.
Process Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate collaboration among workforce development leaders (e.g., state agencies, higher education, training providers) to ensure Head Start programs are included in workforce initiatives. • Support efforts to increase awareness of early childhood career pathways by connecting Head Start programs with relevant training, scholarships, and credentialing opportunities.
Expected Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger collaboration between SDHSCO and workforce development leaders, ensuring Head Start's presence in statewide workforce planning. • Enhanced access to training, scholarships, and career pathways for early childhood educators. • More Head Start professionals participating in professional development opportunities or earning credentials.

Priority 4	Coordinate with school systems to ensure continuity and alignment across programs (including Head Start), as appropriate.
Long-Range Goal	Facilitate collaboration between Head Start programs and school systems to promote continuity and alignment across early childhood programs, ensuring smoother transitions and improved educational outcomes for children and families.
Process Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen communication and partnerships between Head Start programs and school districts to enhance collaboration on transitions, curriculum alignment, and shared professional development. • Support Head Start programs in engaging with school systems by identifying best practices, sharing resources, and promoting successful transition strategies.
Expected Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved communication and collaboration between Head Start programs and school districts. • More school districts recognizing and engaging with Head Start in transition planning. • Wider distribution and use of transition resources and best practices.

Priority 5a	Strengthen collaboration between SD Head Start programs and statewide homeless service providers, including McKinney-Vento Liaisons, to improve the identification, recruitment, and enrollment of homeless children in early childhood education.
Long-Range Goal	Establish a sustainable network of collaboration between Head Start programs, McKinney-Vento liaisons, and statewide homeless service providers to improve the identification, outreach, and support of children experiencing homelessness.
Process Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and strengthen partnerships between Head Start programs, McKinney-Vento liaisons, and homelessness service providers to improve outreach and identification of eligible children. • Improve information sharing and coordination between Head Start and service providers to streamline referrals and enrollment processes.
Expected Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased coordination and communication between Head Start programs and homeless service providers. • Improved awareness among McKinney-Vento liaisons and homeless service providers about Head Start's services and enrollment policies for homeless children. • Greater Head Start participation among homeless families, leading to increased stability and early learning support for vulnerable children.

Priority 5b	Support and connect recipients to available programs that promote overall well-being, stability, and economic mobility for families.
Long-Range Goal	Collaborate with state agencies, healthcare providers, community organizations, workforce development programs, and social service agencies to improve Head Start families' access to mental health, nutrition services, workforce, and family self-sufficiency resources.
Process Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen partnerships with mental health providers, substance misuse prevention programs, and early childhood stakeholders to improve access to mental health services, trauma-informed care, and substance misuse resources for Head Start families and staff. • Facilitate collaboration between Head Start programs and state agencies, community organizations, and nutrition service providers to improve families' access to healthy food, nutrition education, and wellness programs that support child and family well-being. • Collaborate with workforce development programs, higher education institutions, and employment training providers to increase access to career development, job training, and economic mobility opportunities for Head Start families. • Partner with social service agencies, financial literacy programs, and community-based organizations to connect Head Start families with resources that support long-term stability, including housing, financial planning, childcare assistance, and family empowerment programs.
Expected Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved collaboration and coordination between Head Start programs and service providers. • Increased awareness and utilization of mental health, nutrition, and self-sufficiency resources among Head Start families.