

# A User's Guide

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*Ensuring Quality and  
Accountability  
Through Leadership*



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# Foreword



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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Administration for Children and Families  
Administration on Children, Youth and Families  
Head Start Bureau

The National Head Start Child Development Institute, held in Washington, DC, December 4-8, 2000, was a hallmark training event for over 3,200 education leaders from Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and delegate agencies throughout the country. The week-long professional seminar was grounded in the Head Start Program Performance Standards and the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework. The goal of the Institute was to increase the knowledge and leadership skills of local program managers in these key ways:

- Supporting child development and learning in the domains of language development, literacy, mathematics, science, creative arts, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, and physical health and development;
- Supporting school readiness and positive child outcomes in Early Head Start and Head Start through comprehensive child development services, age-appropriate meaningful curriculum, child observation and assessment, family involvement and partnerships; and
- Enhancing the quality, intentionality, and effectiveness of staff interactions with children and families.

This multimedia educational package is intended to provide you with the means to continue the learning opportunities started at the National Head Start Child Development Institute. Each area of content and each faculty member is represented here, along with supplementary materials that provide for a complete learning experience. I think you will find that using the content of this multimedia package will help you “ensuring quality and accountability through leadership.”

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Douglas Klafehn".

Douglas Klafehn  
Acting Associate Commissioner  
Head Start Bureau

# Using the Training Package

This Training Package is designed to assist Head Start and Early Head Start agencies in improving the quality and outcomes of their programs, especially child development services. Specifically, it is intended to help local program managers in developing and implementing action plans to improve curriculum, assessment, teaching, and learning opportunities for all children in center-based, home-based, family child care, and in child care partnerships. The videotapes and printed materials allow a variety of audiences to learn from and to plan the implementation of ideas, practices and recommendations of the twenty-nine faculty members who presented at the Head Start Child Development Institute. The Training Package is a valuable resource to the following groups:

- **Head Start Directors, Education Coordinators and other managers who attended the Child Development Institute** — to review and deepen their understanding of the strategies and content presented at the Institute, and to sharpen the focus and support the implementation of their vision, action plans and improvement strategies.
- **Head Start and Early Head Start teaching teams, home visitors, other staff members, parents and governing board leadership** — to see and hear the Institute faculty presentations and contribute to discussing, planning, and actions to apply and implement relevant practices and strategies in their local programs.
- **Head Start Bureau and ACF Regional Office staff and Head Start training and technical assistance providers** can use the Training Package as they support and oversee the work of local programs in implementing leadership efforts to enhance learning opportunities for children and families, revising program plans and management systems, conducting ongoing monitoring and annual program self-assessment reviews and preparing for and following up on federal on-site PRISM reviews.
- **Head Start and Early Head Start leadership teams who were unable to attend the Institute** can use these materials, including the Institute *Implementation Planner*, to create the Institute experience and engage in the full cycle of program self-assessment and action planning followed by Institute participants. This process begins with a set of suggested assignments to engage in reflection, program observation and review of documentation of the current status of your agency's child development services. (As a starting place, pages 11, 24, 36, 48 and 61 in the *Implementation Planner* ask you to think about and discuss where your program is in relationship to the five core content areas covered in these materials.)

## How is the Training Package Organized?

This Training Package is based on the content and design of the National Head Start Child Development Institute. It includes six training videotapes, a *User's Guide*, and an *Implementation Planner*. The videotapes and the *User's Guide* have been organized according to the following areas: Curriculum and Assessment, Language Development, Literacy, Math and Science, and Social and Emotional Development. The *User's Guide* corresponds with the content of the videotapes in order to facilitate their most effective use and enhance training experiences. The *User's Guide* provides highlights and handouts of all featured Institute speakers' presentations and at the end of each section, includes some relevant Head Start Program Performance Standards and a bibliography of additional reference sources. The resource lists include books and reports, annotated bibliographies, other videos, and related Internet sites. Each videotape contains presentations by Institute Faculty on various aspects of each content area. The tapes are designed so that trainers can stop periodically for content review and participant discussions before proceeding.

## Thoughts on Training

The following suggestions may stimulate your thinking about this Training Package for supporting staff and community learning, planning, and actions.

- Use the Package to guide ongoing self-assessment efforts of program quality and practices in each of the five core content areas of the Institute. Use materials to plan needed changes by looking critically at classroom, home-based, family child care settings, practices and partnerships with families. Practices should then be compared and refined, using video and print examples as part of a template for evaluating progress over time.
- Use these materials in program efforts on child outcomes, beginning with using the materials on curriculum and assessment to improve and align program curriculum and assessment tool(s) with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework. Incorporate the training materials into discussions about initial efforts to analyze and report data on patterns of children's progress and accomplishments. Take

# Using the Training Package

advantage of the rich array of resources from the Institute on strategies to foster children's progress in the eight general domains of language development, literacy, mathematics, science, creative arts, and social and emotional development. Expand discussions of child outcomes by including all program staff in identifying activities that contribute to positive child outcomes, such as maximizing opportunities for *all* staff members to engage children in conversation and dialogue, and reinforce the role of parents in fostering learning at home. Engage staff in using materials to highlight the connections of learning opportunities across domains.

- Use the materials in dialogue and planning with local institutions of higher education, consultants, and training providers who support staff development and ongoing program improvement efforts. For example, explore opportunities for courses in local colleges to incorporate the issues and content of the Institute in ongoing education for Head Start and other community-based early care and education teachers.
- Organize a community-wide Early Childhood Curriculum Institute or Forum with child care, preschool, family child care networks, Even Start, early intervention and kindergarten partners to engage in collective discussion on ways to implement improved practices and enhanced learning opportunities across programs.
- Use these materials for small group and/or self-paced orientation for new staff, with support by a coach, mentor, supervisor or peer partner.
- As part of efforts aimed at effective transitions, sponsor shared inservice to help inform school districts and child care partners and expand understanding of Head Start curriculum development, child assessment and child outcomes.
- Plan an extended study of up to one-year for a single area where your program may need work and support.

## Reviewing the User's Guide

The following general tips can assist you in obtaining maximum benefits from the *User's Guide*.

- It is recommended that you review the entire document before you focus on any particular section. In this way

you will get an idea of the breadth of content areas and note specific elements to refer to later as you develop your training and action plans.

- Read presentation highlights and handouts, then view the videotape. This way, you will gain a deeper understanding of the messages and key points of each faculty presenter.
- Refer to publications in the bibliography section to gain greater insight and in-depth understanding about a specific topic. Review these publications, if you are not familiar with them, to help decide how best to use them in conjunction with videotape segments and other training materials in your local program.
- Refer to the Head Start Program Performance Standards, and the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework to ground your study and planning in the overall context of Head Start Bureau policies and standards for child development services.

## Using the Videotapes

The following tips can assist you in using the videotapes more effectively:

- These tapes may be used in a variety of ways and formats including distance learning opportunities, live workshops, and individual study.
- Select individual content area(s) to focus on and view the corresponding tape(s), concentrating on the specific messages offered by each speaker and using the *User's Guide* as a tool to enhance and further clarify the contents of the tape.
- After becoming familiar with the contents of each tape, decide how to best present and use the content with your particular audience. Most audiences can benefit from viewing a videotape in segments that are followed by time for personal reflection, journal writing, note taking, comments by the trainer, facilitated discussion, or team planning around how to apply and implement the ideas and strategies in classrooms, home-based services, and family/community partnerships. (Note that at the end of each presentation segment, the "curtain" closes and the Head Start blocks drop down and rest in the bottom right-hand corner of the screen, signaling the chance to pause or stop before the next presentation begins.)