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# The Salvation Army - Early Head Start Program



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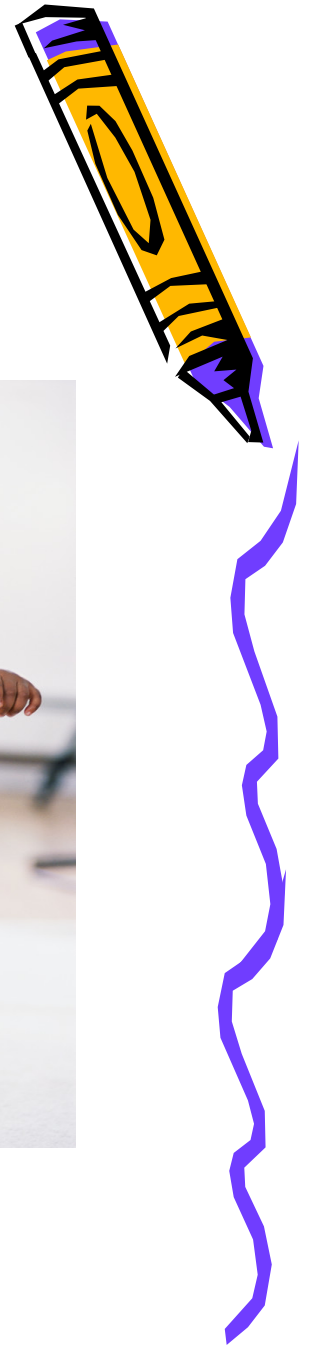


**Targeting Happy, Healthy Babies & Families**

# What is Early Head Start?

The Salvation Army Early Head Start is a federally funded home-based and center-based program for low-income infants, toddlers, pregnant women and their families. EHS programs:

- Enhance children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development;
- Assist pregnant women to access comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care;
- Support parents' efforts to fulfill their parental roles;
- Help parents move toward self-sufficiency.



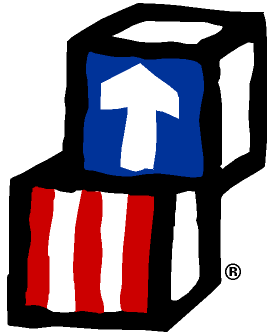
# Goals of the Program

In 1997 The Salvation Army Early Head Start Program began serving families in the Omaha area. It's overall goals have remained constant for over 10 year - empowering parents by encouraging self sufficiency, promoting healthy child development and supporting the family unit.



The program supports parents in fulfilling their parental roles and helps them move toward economic independence. We respond to the unique needs of the community and to the children and families served within the community. We also offer families of young children with disabilities or developmental delays an opportunity to participate in our home-based or center-based options.





# What Does Early Head Start Provide?



The Salvation Army Early Head Start families have the opportunity to participate in the following:

- Family gatherings
- In home consultation
- Parent education
- Child Screenings
- Planning for the future
- Child care
- Material assistance
- Family Library
- Transportation services
- Mental health support
- Medical/dental connections
- Transitioning to appropriate programs



# Who is Eligible?

Families qualify for the program if they live within Douglas County, are categorically eligible (foster child, homeless, on TANF or SSI) or income eligible (based on the Federal Poverty Guidelines), and ...



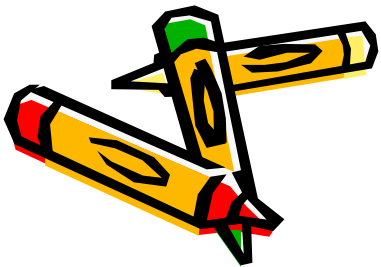
they are expecting ...



have an infant or toddler with disabilities ...



or have a child or children under age 3.

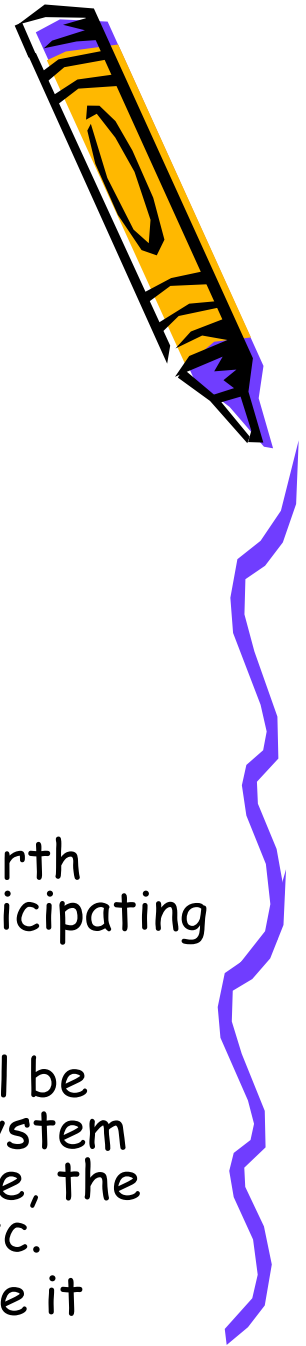


# How to Apply for the Program



Families may apply to the program in person at any time, or be referred by another organization.

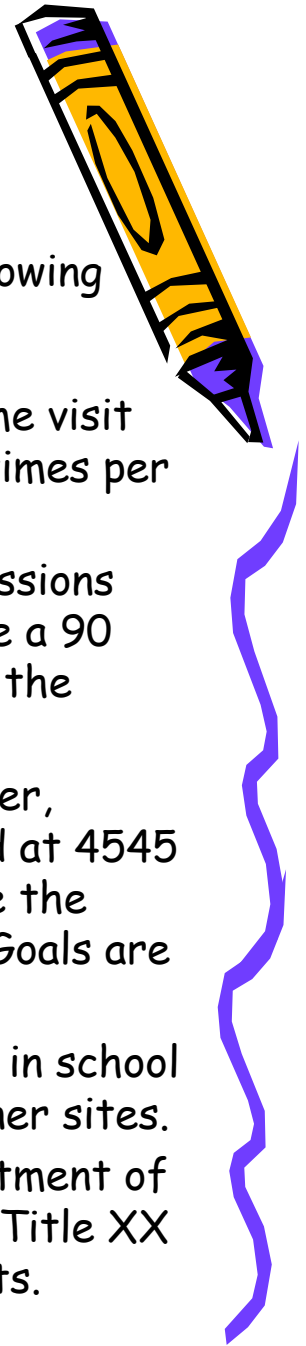
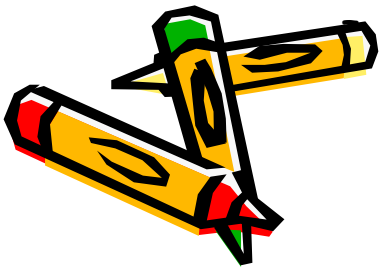
- Families must show proof of income, as well as birth verification for the child(ren) who would be participating in the program.
- Once the application has been completed by our Community Resource & Intake Coordinator, it will be prioritized on the waiting list based on a point system which considers the child's age, the family income, the family and child's needs and current situation, etc.
- Families will be contacted and offered a slot once it becomes available.



# Program Options

The Salvation Army Early Head Start provides services through the following program options:

- **Home-Based:** Children birth to 3 years old receive a weekly home visit lasting 90 minutes. Pregnant women may have home visits 1 to 4 times per month, based on the outcome of her prenatal assessment.
- **Center-Based (6 hours per day):** Children attend classroom sessions five days per week, Monday through Friday. Families also receive a 90 minute home visit twice monthly and 2 home visits per year from the child's classroom Teacher.
- **Partnering Centers** are Stepping Stones Child Development Center, located at 3612 Cuming and Child Savings Institute (CSI) located at 4545 Dodge Street (off of 46th & Dodge). Center-based partners use the Creative Curriculum which focuses on the child as an individual. Goals are set to meet the individual needs of each child.
  - This option is available for parents who are employed and/or in school full time, however, no transportation is provided at our partner sites. Parents must apply for Title XX benefits through the Department of Health and Human Services. Regardless of the outcome for Title XX benefits, your child may be eligible for our center-based slots.



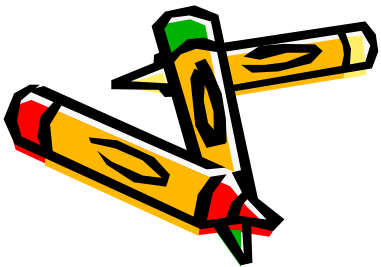


# Home Visits



The Salvation Army Early Head Start Program is a full year home-based program with a program year of August 1 to July 31. During a 12 month period each home-based family will be offered, at a minimum, 44 home visits.

During these visits, Family Consultants, using the Parents As Teachers Curriculum, share age-appropriate child development information with parents, help parents learn to observe their child's development, address parenting concerns, and engage the family in activities that provide meaningful parent/child interaction and support the child's development. The Parents As Teachers vision teaches that all children will learn, grow and develop to realize their full potential.

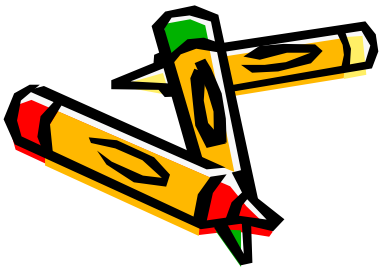


# Your Developing Child

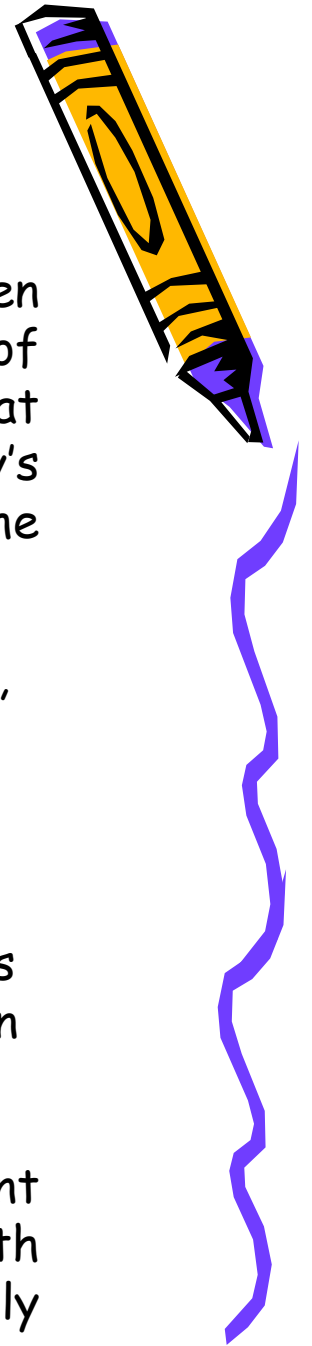


Developmental screening of all children are provided within 45 calendar days of the child's entry into the program and at intervals throughout the family's involvement in the Program. The screenings:

- Assess for social/emotional, cognitive, communication, and motor skills,
- Review how the child is progressing, and if they are functioning within normal limits
- Measure the developmental milestones that a typical child will meet at certain months of age.



The Family Consultant will complete the assessment form with the parent. These assessments along with the child's goals will be used by the parent and Family Consultant to plan home visit activities.

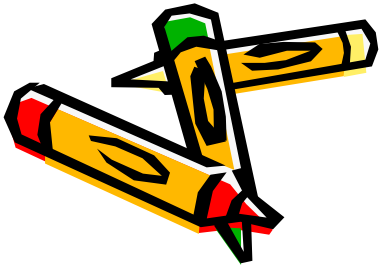


# Health Resources



Early Head Start promotes the importance of health care. We are aware that physical well being impacts a child's development, especially in the early, formative years. We emphasize the importance of good health care practices, including:

- Disease prevention,
- Health maintenance (well baby checks and immunizations),
- Early intervention (hearing, vision)
- Proper nutrition, and
- Home safety (lead testing)

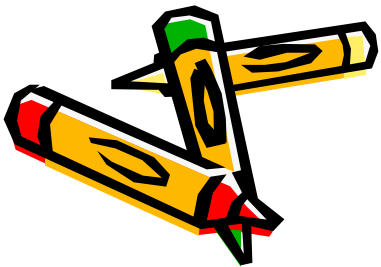


# Mental Health Support & Family Well-Being



It's tough being a parent trying to cope with and understand all the emotional and developmental concerns that may arise with your child. The EHS Program provides many opportunities for parents to receive the mental health support they need to raise an happy, healthy child. These services include:

- The **Brigance Screening** tool can help identify social/emotional issues with a child and allows parents to communicate more openly about these issues
- **Parent meetings and socializations** may also provide a source of informal communication regarding parent's childrearing practices and any concerns regarding their child's development and/or emotional well being.
- Quarterly **newsletters** serve as a source of parent education, community resources, typical child development and parenting tips.
- The **Mental Health Consultant** may work with the child/family on an individual basis, but will also refer a child/family to a community mental health provider, psychologist, and/or psychiatrist if needed.



# Pregnant Women



Each pregnant woman in the program receives:

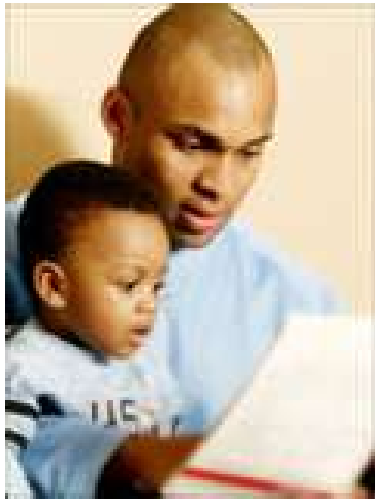
- **A Prenatal Risk Assessment**
- **An Individualized Prenatal Service Plan** to be used to plan home visits
- **Information on topics** such as breastfeeding, labor and delivery, affects of drugs and alcohol on the fetus, postpartum depression, and fetal development.
- **Health support** and guidance

Within two weeks of birth, Health Services staff and the Family Consultant conduct a home visit with the mother and newborn which includes:

- **A physical assessment** of the baby,
- **Discussing needs and interests** related to the development of the child and the well-being of the mother
- **An assessment for postpartum depression**



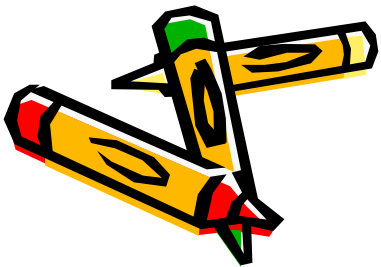
# Involving Dad



"Building and nurturing a father-child relationship requires the knowledge that it can be done, the commitment that it will be done, the persistence to keep on trying, and the courage to do whatever is necessary to make sure that it does get done."

*Will Glennon, Fathering: Strengthening Connection No Matter Where You Are, (1995)*

From working with their child on their weekly activity goals to attending Family Gatherings to being a parent representative on the Policy Council, dads play a vital role in the Early Head Start Program and are encouraged to become as involved as possible.



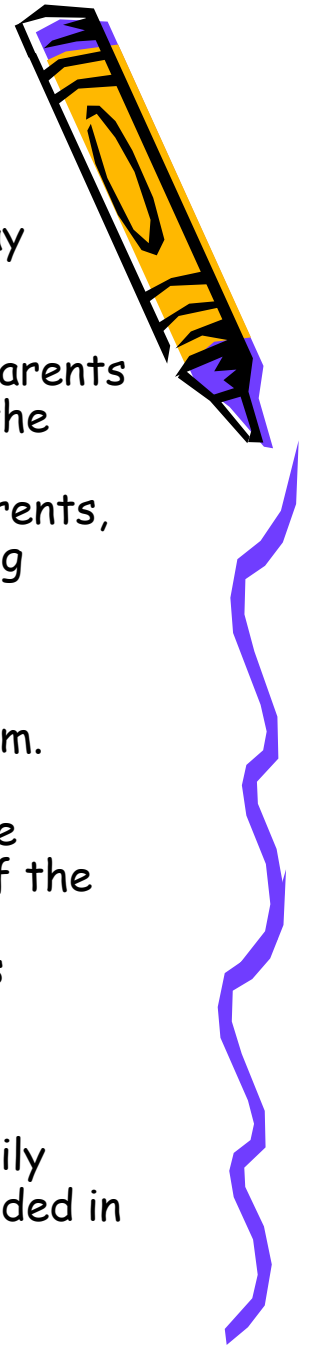
# Parent Involvement

Parents are VIPs (Very Important Parents) in Early Head Start! They play three vital roles in the functioning of the program:

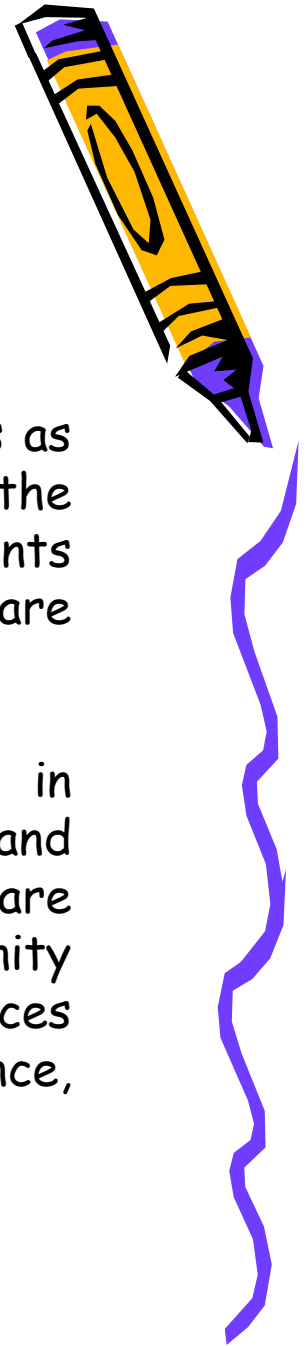
**Parents as Teachers:** As the child's first and most important teacher, parents play an important role in the Program. These first years of learning are the most crucial in a child's years of development. During home visits Family Consultants share age-appropriate child development information with parents, help parents learn to observe their child's development, address parenting concerns, and engage the family in activities that provide meaningful parent/child interaction and support the child's development.

**Parents as Leaders:** Parents have many opportunity to impact the program. Parents on the Policy Council work in partnership with Early Head Start management staff and The Salvation Army Governing Body to assist in the decision making process regarding the planning, policies and procedures of the program. Parents are also offered the opportunity to provide input and suggestions to the program about their interests and needs through Parent Surveys and Parent Meetings.

**Parents as Volunteers:** Parents contribute their time by volunteering in the classroom, home visiting, attending Family Gatherings and working on activities at home that are included in their child's educational and developmental goals.



# Community Resources



The Early Head Start Program serves as a link between families and the community. Our goal is to help parents learn how to access resources that are within the community.

Family Consultants assist families in accessing community resources, and advocating for themselves. Referrals are made to local agencies and community resources to help families obtain services such as food stamps, energy assistance, and housing assistance.



# Contact Us!

If you or someone you know can benefit from being involved in Early Head Start, please contact us at:

The Salvation Army Early Head Start  
3612 Cuming St.  
Omaha, NE 68131  
(402) 898-7504

Or e-mail our Community Resource and Intake

Coordinator at: [lizbeth\\_palensky@usc.salvationarmy.org](mailto:lizabeth_palensky@usc.salvationarmy.org)

