



Head Start/Early Head Start – NC Work First (TANF) Innovation & Sustainability Grants

The NC Head Start-State Collaboration Office, in partnership with the NC Division of Social Services, will release a Request for Proposals competitive funding opportunity in November 2013 (Note: This opportunity was originally announced in late June through mid-July via a series of summer Webcasts administered by the NC Head Start-State Collaboration Office).

Head Start (or Early Head Start) programs and local Department of Social Services agencies are invited to team up to submit a joint application in response to the soon-to-be released *Head Start – TANF Innovation & Sustainability Grants* opportunity. We are seeking proposals that clearly describe plans for **sustained** collaborative partnerships between Head Start (or Early Head Start) programs and the NC Work First program that will lead to: i. Programmatic efficiencies through cost-sharing and ii. The development of a well-coordinated system of seamless services for children and families served by – or eligible to be served by – both programs. Specifically, applicants will be asked to design an effective plan that can be sustained to accomplish all of the following benchmark goals:

1. Significant increases in the referrals of families participating in the NC Work First program to Head Start or Early Head Start programs for enrollment
2. Significant increases in the number of referrals that Head Start or Early Head Start programs make to local DSS agencies of families potentially eligible to receive Work First services
3. The development of an effective system of communication and information-sharing between Head Start and local DSS agencies that is immune to staff-turnover in agencies
4. Joint training opportunities for Head Start staff and NC Work First staff that have similar job functions

The NC Head Start-State Collaboration Office and the NC Division of Social Services welcome new and creative strategies for partnering, as long as the proposed methods have a very strong likelihood of achievability and can be sustained beyond the term of the grant.

We strongly recommend that Head Start programs and local DSS partners begin meeting and planning now (well before the release of the RFP in November) to be acquainted with each other's program services and requirements; and to devote as much time as possible to the development of proposals of highest quality.