

## Vision & Hearing Screenings

### Head Start Performance Standards

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§ 1302.33 (a) (1) (2)

#### Policy

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Timely and ongoing screenings are critical in identifying concerns regarding a child's development. Head Start and Early Head Start children will receive vision and hearing screenings within their first 45 days of enrollment. Additional screenings may be completed on an individualized basis as needs or concerns arise. Vision and hearing screenings will be completed by trained Head Start Staff, trained professionals, or students under the supervision of clinical instructors. Classroom staff will be informed in advance when screeners are scheduled to come visit their classroom.

Prior to screening, consent is obtained on the **Consent for School Activities** form, which is discussed with parents at registration. Only children whose parent/guardian has given consent will be screened.

Once screenings are completed, screening results are shared with parents. If a parent has a concern about a child's development, they can request additional screenings. Screening results are entered into ChildPlus.

#### Vision and Hearing Screenings

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- Vision and hearing screenings are conducted within 45 calendar days of a child's first day of attendance and as needed to meet Head Start Program Performance Standards. Screenings will be conducted during the school year as new children enter the program or for children who need to be rescreened. Results may also be obtained from a physician if an evidence-based test was performed.
- All new children will receive a hearing screening. Returning children who passed a hearing screening from the previous year are not required to have a new screening. A child must be re-screened if there are concerns about hearing noted by staff or parents, or if the previous year follow-up is unclear or if the child did not receive passing results.
- All children will receive an annual vision screening with an evidence-based screening tool, such as a PlusOptix machine.
  - OHSU Casey Eye Institute will come to every Head Start classroom within the first 45 days of school to screen all students with consent. A separate consent form from Casey Institute will be given to parents at registration, this consent form allows OHSU to use the screenings results for their study. All results will be sent to parents. OHSU Casey Eye Institute will follow up with families for all students who did not pass their screening.
  - Hearing and vision screenings in Early Head Start will be performed by Health Services. .
- Every vision or hearing attempt is entered into ChildPlus so that the program can monitor the child's progress and ensure timely follow-up.
- If a child refuses or fails the first hearing screening, one more attempt will be made by the Head Start Staff. **Absences do not count as attempts.**
- **Hearing and Vision Screening Results** forms will be filled out by the screener.
- Results will be discussed and sent home to parents by the teacher, noting anything that may be a concern.

**Community Action Head Start  
Washington County, Oregon**

**Preparing for vision and hearing screenings**

Classroom staff will prepare children for the health screening process by including these suggested activities with their other classroom activities:

- Tell the children in advance when health screenings will take place in the classroom. Tell them what kinds of screening to expect. Provide names of the screeners if possible.
- Role plays the type of screening that is scheduled.
- Tell or read a story about the health screening activity.
- Talk about the screening activity and discuss how the children feel about it.
- When screeners come to the classroom, introduce the screeners to the children.
- Teachers are responsible to ensure that only children with a signed consent will participate in the screening.
- Additional consent forms may be required for children participating in the screening process conducted by outside partners.

**Vision and Hearing Concerns**

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- If a child requires a professional examination by a medical provider, the teacher will discuss the concerns with the parents and encourage the child to be seen by the medical professional.
- Health Services Supervisor will work with the teacher to help assist a family if they do not have a medical home, insurance or need further assistance in receiving follow up on a concern.
- All communications will be documented under the related Health Event in ChildPlus.