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INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

TO: All Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees

SUBJECT: Strengthening Head Start and Ensuring Accountability

INFORMATION:

The Office of Head Start (OHS) is taking several steps to ensure the highest level of program quality and accountability in all Head Start and Early Head Start programs. One key step is providing Head Start communities and the public an easy way to contact OHS through new reporting features now available on the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) website.

The ECLKC has always provided opportunities for individuals to submit inquiries to OHS. Now, new reporting features have been added to the homepage that enhance user friendliness and assist OHS in obtaining the information necessary to respond to concerns or initiate appropriate action, as needed.

When you visit the ECLKC at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>, you will find at the top of the homepage a new banner divided into three sections. Each section displays a picture of a button and represents three distinct reporting categories:

1. Questions
2. Suggestions to Strengthen Head Start
3. Complaints

Whether you have a question, suggestion, or a complaint about a Head Start program in your community, OHS wants to hear from you.

A direct link to the HHS Office of Inspector General (OIG) is located in the red ribbon at the bottom of the banner. OHS encourages anyone who suspects fraud, waste, misuse, or abuse of federal funds to submit their concerns directly to the OIG Hotline.

These new features on the ECLKC are not intended to replace grantees' ongoing communication with the Administration for Children and Families regional offices. Additionally, local programs, staff, and parents should continue to seek answers or solutions through avenues available within their own agencies before contacting OHS.

OHS is committed to continue its efforts to increase program accountability at every level and to maintain the public's trust of Head Start and Early Head Start programs across the country.

/ Yvette Sanchez Fuentes /

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