

# Recruitment

## Developing Effective Outreach Systems

*Recruiting for Head Start programs is a systematic, year-round process. These strategies and guiding questions will help you manage your program's [recruitment efforts](#). Find out how recruitment should be data-informed and measurable.*

### Building from a Strong Foundation

Recruiting requires Head Start programs to reach out to families with eligible children. It involves informing families about program services to encourage and help them to apply. The process must be systematic, measurable, and include specific efforts to actively locate and recruit income- and categorically eligible children. A recruitment plan uses multiple channels to engage families, connect with the community, and build relationships with potential partners. Recruitment approaches and materials show sensitivity and respect for the diverse families in the geographic area served, including families from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. A program's recruitment efforts also use audience-specific messaging to highlight their ability to provide safe and high-quality learning environments. The program engages community partners to support the avenues to enrollment.

### Did you know?



Children and families in Head Start programs speak more than 140 languages. However, most Head Start children who are dual language learners speak Spanish at home. Does your program's recruitment materials meet the language needs of the families in your community? Is this confirmed by your program's community assessment?



Facebook and LinkedIn are the most widely used online platforms. Their user base is representative of the population as a whole. For many users, social media is part of their daily routine. How does your program use [social media](#) to communicate with families?



For some programs, intensified recruitment efforts involve hiring a marketing consultant. Consultants provide additional expertise in enhancing outreach efforts and marketing services.

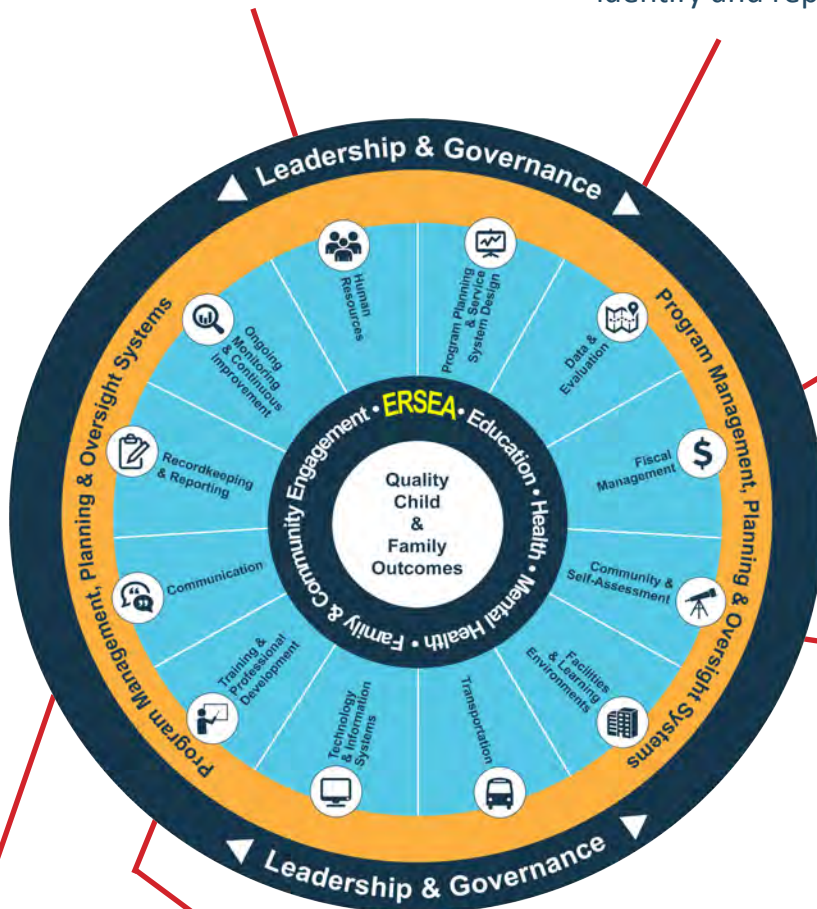
# A Systems Perspective: *Questions to consider*



How does your program's **human resources** system leverage the staff's backgrounds and expertise to inform and enhance recruitment efforts?



How does your program's **data and evaluation** system measure the effectiveness of recruitment efforts? How is this data used to reach families most in need? Does this data help identify and replicate best practices?



How does your program's **fiscal** system support recruitment? How does it allocate resources for marketing and professional development?



How is **community assessment** data used to identify income-eligible children? This includes children whose families receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), children in families experiencing homelessness, and children living in foster care. How is data used to identify children with disabilities?



How does your program's **communication** system make sure messaging reflects the needs of eligible families? Do these materials communicate the program's values and services?



How does your program's **training and professional development** system foster a foundational understanding of ERSEA services in all staff? Can staff articulate your program's recruitment process.



# Planning for Continuous Improvement



Your program should develop metrics for measuring and analyzing recruitment strategies to identify future performance goals. This includes working with partnering organizations serving vulnerable populations. Such organizations may include local educational and social service agencies, public health centers, housing projects, mental health centers, homeless shelters, and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Your plan may establish and measure data-informed goals around those partnerships. The sharing and analysis of data through community assessment, ongoing monitoring, and self-assessment guarantees that data is used to continuously strengthen recruitment efforts.

## Resource Spotlight

### [#GetaHeadStart Recruitment Resources](#)

Connecting with your community can help your program's recruitment efforts. Use these resources to enhance your current outreach and recruitment strategy. Resources include handouts, posters, social media assets, and more.

### [Social Media Essentials for Getting Programs Connected](#)

Do you have a well-defined plan for the use of social media as a recruitment tool? Learn how to develop a social media plan, explore best practices, and learn ways to tailor platforms to showcase your program.

### [Supporting Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness](#)

A deeper understanding of family homelessness will help you develop practices to strengthen your recruitment efforts for this population. Use these modules to learn how to identify families experiencing homelessness, conduct community outreach, and much more.



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