



Frequently Asked Questions

- **How can I enroll my child in Head Start?**

There are two ways to submit an application for your child to enroll in Head Start. You may apply in person at any of our centers or Administrative Office. You may also submit your information online through this website: www.ochsinc.org.

- **How old does my child have to be to get into Early Head Start/Head Start?**

Children as young as 6 weeks old can start participating in Early Head Start center base/ home base programs; however eligibility applications can be completed once the child is born. Pregnant women at any time during their pregnancy. Head Start participants must be between 3 to 4 years old as of September 1st 2020 to be enrolled. Children who turn 5 years old after September 1st are also eligible to apply.

- **What are the hours of the Orange County Head Start programs?**

Most of our Head Start part-day programs operate from 8:00 AM to 11:30 AM or 12:30 PM to 4:00 PM. The full-day programs for Early Head Start and Head Start operate from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM. Early Head Start and Head Start Home Base programs will work with your schedule to conduct the 1 ½ hour weekly home visit.

- **Does my child have to be potty trained?**

No, Head Start does not require children to be potty trained for enrollment.

- **What are the income requirements? How do I know if my family qualifies?**

Income requirements are set by the federal government and are changed each year. The best way to find out if your family qualifies is to submit an application online or in person. Once all application required documents are received a Community Outreach Advocate will inform you of eligibility.

- **Will my child be able to apply if he/she has a special need?**

Yes, we welcome children with special needs. We have qualified inclusion support staff on board that will assist your child to successfully participate in the least restrictive environment of learning for him/her.

- **If the child's biological parents are not in the household, what types of documents are required to enroll her/him in the Early Head Start/Head Start program?**

Power of Attorney document with the seal, adoption papers, proof from social worker or relevant documents stating that the child is temporarily in your care.

- **I've already applied, what next?**

If you already completed and submitted an application in person or online, there will be a second phone interview with a Community Outreach Advocate who will go over the application information and required documents submitted to determine eligibility. **NOTE:** Eligibility cannot be completed without receipt of the eligibility documents. Please review the Application Documentation Checklist for further guidance.



During the phone interview the Community Outreach Advocate will verify your family income, housing situation, family size, additional services the family receives and your child's birth date.

Income: To do this you will need to submit a copy of last year's signed 1040 Income Tax Return, all W-2 forms from the previous year, at least one month's worth of consecutive check stubs (no older than a month from the date of application), SSI, TANF Cash Aid, adoption assistance, foster care agreement, grants/scholarship, child support, unemployment, disability, 1099-MISC forms, Social Security benefits, military pay, OCHS Self-Declaration Form to declare cash payments, family support, verbal agreement child support or no income. If the family is homeless, a family support/shelter letter can be submitted.

Child's Birth Date: To verify your child's birth date we will need a copy of the birth certificate, hospital certificate, passport, foster care placement, court orders regarding custody or adoption documents.

After completing this interview, the Community Outreach Advocate will determine if your family is eligible and will also identify which program your child is eligible for. Your child's application will be placed on the appropriate waitlist to await consideration for enrollment into one of our programs.

- **Where is the nearest Head Start program to my home?**

There are 42 Head Start centers located throughout Orange County. To find the nearest one to your home visit the **Locations** tab.

- **Can I stay in the classroom with my child?**

Yes, parents are always welcome to volunteer at their child's classroom/center. **NOTE:** Parents volunteering must meet the requirements outlined on SB 277.

- **When does school start and end?**

Enrollment is ongoing throughout the year; however the Head Start program year is September to June while Early Head Start goes through August.

- **Will I need to turn in another application if my child is on the waitlist?**

All applications are valid for one program year. If your child is eligible he/she will remain on the waitlist until a vacancy occurs and he/she is next to be selected. **NOTE:** If your family situation changes (e.g. family income, family size, housing situation or newly diagnosed disability) please contact the **Enrollment department at the Administrative Office 714-241-8920** for the next steps. Once the current program year comes to an end if your child has not been selected, you will need to reapply to determine eligibility for the next program year.

- **I've applied and qualified eligibility has been determined, when do I enroll my child?**

When there is an opening at your center of choice and your child is next on the waitlist a Community Outreach Advocate will contact you to complete an enrollment packet.

- **I've completed the enrollment packet when does my child start?**

Once the enrollment packet is completed, it will be reviewed by our Health, Nutrition and Inclusion departments at our Administrative Office. After the thorough review it will be forwarded to the center and you will be contacted by your child's teacher to schedule orientation. Part of the enrollment packet will require submitting a current **physical**



exam/well check and **Tuberculosis Risk Assessment** within 30 days of entry. A current **immunization record** will also be required for the child to start, unless otherwise specified. Please click [here](#) to view the immunization schedule OCHS follows. **NOTE:** If your child has any allergies and/or medical concerns additional forms may be required before he/she can start.

Head Start - Part Day

The Head Start preschool program offers an early childhood program for children 3 to 5 years of age whose families qualify for our Head Start services. These Head Start centers generally operate a part day program from 8:00 AM to 11:30 AM that includes breakfast and lunch or 12:30 PM to 4:00 PM that includes lunch and a snack.

Early Head Start & Head Start - Full Day

We also offer a full day program to meet the needs of parents who are attending school full time (9 units or more), working or in a job training program for at least 20 hours Monday to Friday. The full day program operates from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM and includes breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack.

Early Head Start & Head Start - Home Base

The Home Base program is offered to infants, toddlers, and pregnant women enrolled in Early Head Start and children 3 to 5 years of age enrolled in the Head Start program. The Home Base program services families throughout Orange County emphasizing the parent's role as the primary teacher and advocate for their child. The Home Educator meets with the child and family in the comfort of their own home for 1 1/2 hours each week. The Home Educator encourages good parenting practices, teaches parenting skills, and provides lessons to promote parent-child interactions and learning with age appropriate fun activities. Socializations at various locations with other home base families are planned for the participants bi-monthly. This is a great way to strengthen parent-child relationships and prepare your child for school.