



## Frequently Asked Questions - Worcester Child Development Head Start Program

### What is Head Start?

Head Start is a Federal program for preschool children from low-income families. The Head Start program is operated by local non-profit organizations in almost every county in the country. Children who attend Head Start participate in a variety of educational activities. They also receive free medical and dental care, have healthy meals and snacks, and enjoy playing indoors and outdoors in a safe setting.

Head Start helps all children succeed. Services are offered to meet the special needs of children with disabilities. Most children in Head Start are between the ages of 3 and 5 years old.

### Does my child qualify for Head Start?

You are eligible to apply for your child if:

- You live in the City of Worcester
- Your Child will be 3 or 4 years of age - Priority is given to four year olds
- Your family annual income falls within the Income Guidelines established by the Federal Government

Families must meet the federal income guidelines in order to qualify for the program. Family annual income must be below the annual salaries listed to qualify:

#### 2016 Poverty Guideline

<u>Family/Household of 1</u>	<u>\$11,880</u>
<u>Family/Household of 2</u>	<u>\$16,020</u>
<u>Family/Household of 3</u>	<u>\$20,160</u>
<u>Family/Household of 4</u>	<u>\$24,300</u>
<u>Family/Household of 5</u>	<u>\$28,440</u>
<u>Family/Household of 6</u>	<u>\$32,580</u>
<u>Family/Household of 7</u>	<u>\$36,730</u>
<u>Family/Household of 8</u>	<u>\$40,890</u>

For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$4,160 for each additional person.

### Where are the Head Start sites located in Worcester?

- **Greendale Head Start**, 130 Leeds St., Worcester, MA 01606 Phone: 508-799-3227
- **Mill Swan - A**, 337 Mill St., Worcester, MA 01602 Phone: 508-799-3498
- **Mill Swan - B**, 337 Mill St., Worcester, MA 01602 Phone: 508-799-3255
- **Millbury Street Head Start**, 389 Millbury St., Worcester, MA 01610 Phone: 508-799-3235

### Who should I contact to make an appointment?

Cindy Maldonado, Intake Recruitment Specialist Translator  
Phone: 508-799-3608 - Monday-Friday 8am-3pm

### Where do I go to sign my child up for Head Start in Worcester?

The Taylor Head Start Administrative Building, 770 Main Street, Worcester 01610  
Meter Parking is available on street.

### What information do I need to bring?

In order to process paperwork a copy of the following information is required.

- Child's Birth Certificate
- Child's Social Security Card
- Child's Health Insurance Card
- Your (parent's) picture ID
- Your (parent's) Social Security card or Passport
- Birth certificates for all siblings residing in the home or a copy of last year's income tax form
- Proof of Worcester address (Telephone, electric, cable or gas bill)
- Immunization Records
- Paystubs or Proof of Income (4 weeks for weekly pay or 2 weeks for bi-weekly pay)
- Recent letter of SSI or DTA assistance
- Special Needs Verification form (if any)
- Verification from Homeless Shelter program
- School Verification (schedule and bill) for parent.
- Restraining Order Information (if any)
- Guardianship Information
- Fathers proof of address if needed by the Recruitment specialist

Reminder: Federal Income guidelines apply

### What are the Head Start program options in the Worcester?

The Worcester Child Development Head Start Program follows the Worcester Public Schools School Calendar.

- **Center Based Part Day 9:00am-12:30pm:**  
No Fee  
Operates Monday - Friday  
Must meet eligibility criteria established by the Federal Government  
Documentation is required  
Limited transportation may be available
- **Center Based Full Day 7:30am-4:30pm:**  
Minimal Fee may apply  
Operates Monday - Friday  
Must meet eligibility criteria established by the Federal Government  
Families must be working, formally enrolled in school or in a job training program  
Documentation is required  
Own transportation is required

### Does the Worcester Child Development Head Start program offer transportation?

Yes, transportation is offered, but it is limited to part day program options and program availability. It is not guaranteed.

## What is NAEYC and QRIS?

The **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)** is a professional membership organization that works to promote high-quality early learning for all young children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood practice, policy, and research. All 4 of the Worcester Head Start sites are NAEYC accredited programs.

The **Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS)** is a method to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early care & education. The Worcester Child development Head start sites all have a QRIS level of 3.

## What Services are offered to families and children in Head Start?

### Education:

- Preschool classroom curriculum is developmentally appropriate and meets each child's individual needs.
- Learning experiences foster each child's intellectual, social and emotional growth and supports school readiness.

### Family Services:

- On Going support and case management for families and advocacy and referrals to community agencies to meet each family's needs.

### Health Services:

- Screenings and support that focuses on medical, dental and nutrition services for each child.
- Health education and support for children and families in school and at home.

### Family Involvement:

- Opportunities for parents to participate in classroom activities and/or at home with activities that support the curriculum and school readiness.
- Family events are offered in each building throughout the year.
- Educational and support programs for parents based on family's needs and interests.

### Disabilities/Mental Health:

- Developmental screenings, evaluations, and the implementation of Individual Education Plans.
- Mental health consultation, services and support.
- Head Start staff provide transitional services to children and families into our program from home or other programs and from Head Start to Kindergarten

## Does Head Start accept children with disabilities?

Head Start regulations require that at least 10 percent of enrolled children are children with disabilities. Each Head Start program is responsible for establishing selection criteria and may include children with disabilities from families that have incomes above the Poverty Guidelines, in addition to enrolling children from families with incomes below the Poverty Guidelines.

**What is a developmental screening and why is it important?**

Screening for potential developmental delays in children allows for early treatment and supportive services. On the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website, Head Start educators and families will find a number of resources on developmental screening tools.

**What is the difference between a screening and an assessment?**

Both activities may use a standardized tool. A screening is a brief glimpse of a child's health and development. Assessment is a continual process that tracks a child's developmental progress over time.