



Florida State University Early Head Start Program



Strategic Plan 2025-2030

Empowering Families in Gadsden Since 1996



Project Overview

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to inform Early Head Start priorities and goals for program years 2025-2030. Upholding the mission of Florida State University Early Head Start (FSU EHS) is paramount as we continue providing services to pregnant women and families in Gadsden County, Florida.

FSU EHS views strategic planning as an ideal opportunity to ensure the program conducts activities that meet the needs of the community we serve. FSU EHS has developed this comprehensive Strategic Plan which identifies program goals, objectives, and tracking methods based on a five-year projection.

FSU Early Head Start utilizes a multi-disciplinary team in the planning process and in developing short-range targets and multi-year organizational goals. Overarching goals are based upon program and local community data, stakeholder feedback, and the annual self-assessment process. These goals were integrated into long range goals when systemic issues are identified. Long range goals also incorporate findings from the most recent comprehensive community assessment of needs.

This year's assessment identified internal and external trends. This data analysis helps to plan the program's activities as well as its budget. We believe that strategic planning and management is an ongoing process that is informed by ever-changing landscapes. Therefore, we will continue to work diligently to be a catalyst for success for children, families, staff, and our community.

- 2 Project Overview
- 3 Planning Methodology
- 4 Performance Standards
- 5 Program Goals
- 6 Goal Standards
- 7 Plan Format
- 8 Focus Area 1
- 11 Focus Area 2
- 14 Focus Area 3
- 17 Timeline
- 18 Looking Ahead

Planning Methodology

FSU Early Head Start is a program of the Center for Prevention and Early Intervention Policy (CPEIP). The program’s most recent Strategic Plan was completed in the Spring of 2025 and organizes goals through 2030. The Policy Council, program staff, and program management team participated in planning activities facilitated by an FSU CPEIP Facilitator.



Program Information Reports
Parent and Community Partner Surveys
EHS Focus Groups
2025 Community Assessment

The 2025 Community Assessment guided the process, identifying prevalent social and economic factors, challenges, and barriers experienced by families and children living in Gadsden County. Data gathered revealed trends, challenges, and successes from the previous service year such as, (1) the lack of access to services for child mental health needs, (2) the increase in the number of two-parent households enrolled in FSU Early Head Start, and (3) improvements in social-emotional development for children enrolled in the program. Surveys from parents and agency partners also served to inform the program’s understanding of the community and were intentionally designed to help identify community strengths, needs and resources, and plan the program accordingly.

Community Assessment and Strategic Planning Steps

1. **Organizing the Process** – Involving key stakeholders from the start and mapping the entire process, ensuring the assessment and subsequent action strategies are thorough, accurate, and efficient.
2. **Designing the Work** – Determining the initial questions the assessment needed to answer to appropriately identify useful primary and secondary data.
3. **Gathering Data** – Collecting data from program reports, family surveys, state and national databases, stakeholder surveys, and through EHS focus group discussions.
4. **Analyzing and Making Decisions** – Reviewing program and community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to develop goals and strategies to implement over the next five years.
5. **Communicating and Incorporating** – Integrating data and feedback into the plan to communicate findings and the action steps needed to address them. The plan was then submitted for approval to begin implementation.

Performance Standards

The planning team reviewed Head Start Standards and recommendations. The Administration for Children and Families Office of Head Start recognizes that Strategic Plans are essential to the successful implementation of programs that provide effective support and services for early learning and development, health, and family well-being. The planning process was completed according to Subpart J of the performance standards.



1302 Subpart J—Program Management and Quality Improvement

§1302.100 Purpose. A program must provide management and a process of ongoing monitoring and continuous improvement for achieving program goals that ensure child safety and the delivery of effective, high-quality program services.

§1302.102 Achieving and Establishing Program Goals. A program, in collaboration with the governing body and policy council, must establish goals and measurable objectives that include:(1) Strategic long-term goals for ensuring programs are and remain responsive to community needs as identified in their community assessment.