Why do we do a Community Assessment?

45 CFR § 1305.3 Determining community strengths and needs.

(a) Each grantee must identify its proposed service area in its Head Start grant application and define it.

(b) The grantee's service area must be approved, in writing, by the responsible HHS official in order to assure that the service area is of reasonable size and does not overlap with that of other Head Start grantees.

(c) Each grantee must conduct a Community Assessment within its service area once every three years. The Community Assessment must include the collection and analysis of the following information:

- Demographic make-up of Head Start eligible children and families
- Other child development and child care programs that are serving Head Start eligible children
- Estimated number of children with disabilities four years old or younger, including types of disabilities and relevant services and resources
- Data regarding the education, health, nutrition and social service needs of Head Start eligible children and their families;
- Education, health, nutrition and social service needs as defined by Head Start eligible families
- Resources in the community that could be used to address the needs of Head Start eligible children and their families

(d) The Early Head Start and Head Start grantee and delegate agency must use information from the Community Assessment to:

- Determine the grantee's philosophy, and its long-range and short-range program objectives;
- Determine the type of component services that are most needed and the program option or options that will be implemented;
- Determine the recruitment area that will be served by the grantee
- Delegate agencies recruitment area
- Determine appropriate locations for centers
- Set criteria that define the types of children and families who will be given priority for recruitment and selection