Dear Community Partner,

**Early Head Start (EHS)** is a federally funded program administered locally through NMCAA. We are a home visiting program that serves expectant mothers and parents of children up to three years old.

***We currently provide weekly home visits to 80 enrolled children*** in the central services area (Benzie, Leelanau, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau Counties) on a year round basis. Child & Family Specialists provide weekly home visits to support parents in guiding their child’s development and help families meet their personal goals and connect to community resources. The EHS Program Services Coordinator for this area is Emily Erwin.

**How to refer a family to our program:**

Send an Early Head Start Program Referral to our Recruitment & Health Specialist. **The Recruitment & Health Specialist for this area is Kelsey Hyde who can be reached by phone at (231)346-2131, by e-mail at** **khyde@nmcaa.net****, or by fax at (231)947-4935 Attn: Kelsey Hyde.** We will ask for basic information about the child and family needs including: age, contact information, concerns or reason for referral. (See Referral Form enclosed)

**The Early Head Start Program Process:**

**Step 1: Referral**

**Step 2: Contact Family**- The Recruitment & Health Specialist explains the program & application process.

**Step 3: Application Appointment**- The Recruitment and Health Specialist meets with the family at their home and completes and application. They gather documentation, including proof of income to assist in determining eligibility. They also provide referrals and resources for immediate family needs.

**Step 4: Application Review and Approval-** Priority points are assigned based on family/child needs.

**Step 5: Waitlist-** The child will be added to our county wait list. Children/families with the highest needs are given priority. Children can begin and end services throughout the year.

While on the waitlist, families receive the following support:

* Monthly Playgroup Calendars
* Family Resource Support and Learning Opportunities

**Step 6: Enrollment & Program Participation-** When an opening becomes available, families will be contacted based on priority. The Child and Family Specialist will schedule a home visit to enroll the family and begin providing weekly visits. Together the parent(s) and staff determine and work towards child development and family goals.

**Step 7: Transition-** When the child reaches 30 months, the Child & Family Specialist will begin a transition process with the family. They discuss resources and options for the next educational setting (ex. Head Start, ISD, child care, etc.) and make a plan together to transition the child out of our program around their 3rd birthday.

Thank you for your interest in our program and for supporting families in our area. 