

# EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

## Head Start, Child Care & Child Care Services



Community Assessment  
2006

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction and Methodology.....	3
Chapter 2: Demographic and Economic Profile.....	5
Chapter 3: Community and Family Life.....	9
Chapter 4: Educational, Health, Nutritional and Social Needs.....	14
Chapter 5: Early Childhood Service Network.....	18
Chapter 6: Summary and Conclusions .....	23
List of References .....	24
Appendix A: Family Survey Instrument.....	25
Appendix B: Community Survey Instrument.....	30

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Early Childhood Community Assessment was commissioned by Leech Lake Head Start, the Tribal Head Start grantee agency for the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Indian Reservation. In accordance with Federal Head Start guidelines, this assessment provides the following information:

- Demographic make-up of Head Start eligible children and families,
- Information about the needs of families as reported by families and institutions that serves young children within the Reservation,
- Data about the education, health, nutrition and social service needs of Head Start families,
- Child Development and Child Care programs serving eligible families and
- Other resources in the community that address the needs of families with young children.

The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Early Childhood Community Assessment describes the challenges and priorities of low-income families with young children on the Leech Lake Indian Reservation located in North Central Minnesota. Information was collected for this community assessment from February through May 2006. Four principal methods were used to gather relevant information to provide documentation of an accurate picture of the Head Start service area on the Leech Lake Reservation.

**Early Childhood Survey** - A written survey was distributed by Leech Lake Early Childhood staff to families with young children who are enrolled in Leech Lake Head Start and the Dik-in-aa-gan Child Care Center. This survey asked parents to provide information about themselves and about services they have received through the Head Start Program, Dik-in-aa-gan Child Care Center and the Child Care Program. The survey asked parents to identify the strengths and the challenges they encounter in their communities and the barriers that prevent them from accessing needed services. A total of 91 families with preschool children who live on the Leech Lake Reservation completed the survey. Combined, these families cared for 102 children ages 5 and under. Appendix A provides a descriptive summary of the families who participated in the survey as well as a copy of the survey instrument.

**Focus Groups** - Parents with children between the ages of birth through 5 years old participated in focus groups that were conducted in communities throughout the Leech Lake Reservation. These communities included: Ball Club, Bena, Cass Lake, Inger and Onigum. Focus group participants detailed the strengths and challenges they encounter in their communities and identified ways to improve community services for children and families residing on the Leech Lake Reservation. Appendix B provides a list of the locations and number of participants in each community focus group. Focus groups produce qualitative information about participants' perspectives and experiences living on the Reservation. Since randomization techniques were not used in participant selection, the overall findings of these groups may not yield quantitative results. However, the aggregated information from a number of focus groups can help decision makers identify major themes or issue areas related to community needs and other important program planning concerns.

**County and Community Reports** - Reports such as the Minnesota KIDS COUNT, the Minnesota Children's Report Card and other reports provide information about the strengths, needs and priorities of the Head Start service area. As relevant, these reports are referenced throughout the assessment, and a complete resource list is provided at the end of the report.

**Socio-demographic, Economic and Program Information** - Some of the sources of information specific to the Reservation or on the county-level included in this assessment are from the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, the Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Planning and the U. S. Census Bureau. This information helps to illuminate problems on the Reservation or overlapping counties and, in some cases; it provides evidence to support the perspectives and concerns voiced directly by residents of the region.

Each chapter of the assessment draws information from these data sources and each section of the report includes related quotes or common themes that emerged from focus groups discussions and surveys.

## CHAPTER 2 DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC PROFILE

### POPULATION AND POVERTY STATISTICS

The 2000 Census of the Population provides the most current population and poverty information about residents living on the Leech Lake Indian Reservation. More current population estimates and projections made by the U.S. Census Bureau are available on the Reservation level and for the four counties that overlap the Reservation boundaries (Cass, Beltrami, Hubbard and Itasca).

The 2000 Census information indicates that there has been an increase in the population on the Reservation in the last 10 years. In 1989, about 8,754 people lived on the Leech Lake Reservation including 822 children under the age of six. The Reservation experienced about a 1% increase in the number of children ages 0-5.

According to the 2000 Census, 10,205 people lived on the Leech Lake Reservation including 908 children under the age of six. The 2000 Census suggests that about one-fourth (21.7%) of all residents of the Reservation had incomes at or below the federal poverty threshold, while over one-third (35%) of all young children under the age of 6 lived in poverty (Table 1).

**Table 1: Population and Poverty Estimates for All Residents and Preschoolers**

Leech Lake Reservation – 2000 Census	#	%
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>10,205</b>	
<b>People Living in poverty</b>	<b>2,168</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Total # of children (ages 0-5)</b>	<b>908</b>	
<b>Children living in poverty ( ages 0-6)</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>35%</b>

Table 2 shows the distribution of the population on the Leech Lake Reservation by race. 2000 Census information shows that slightly over one-half of the population was white (51.7%) and 44.7% were American Indian. The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe reports that 4,480 residents of the Reservation (about 43.9% of the population) are tribal members (membership requires residents to be at least one-quarter Ojibwe).

**Table 2: Distribution of the Population by Race**

Leech Lake Reservation - 2000 Census	Percentage
<b>White</b>	<b>51.7%</b>
<b>Black</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>
<b>American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut</b>	<b>44.7%</b>
<b>Asian or Pacific Islander</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	<b>1.4%</b>
<b>Other Race</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>

## OTHER INDICATORS OF NEAR POVERTY

The 2000 Census indicates that nearly one-fourth of all children ages 0-18 on the Leech Lake Reservation (24%) lived in poverty compared to 7.6% for all children across Minnesota (3.2 times greater child poverty rate). Table 3 shows the percentage of children ages 0-18 who lived in poverty in the counties surrounding the Leech Lake Reservation.

**Table 3: Poverty Estimates by County**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Total Population of Children ages 0-18</b>	<b>Percentage of Children Ages 0-18 Living in Poverty 2000 Census</b>
<b>Beltrami County</b>	<b>11,379</b>	<b>19.1%</b>
<b>Cass County</b>	<b>6,774</b>	<b>15.8%</b>
<b>Hubbard County</b>	<b>4,514</b>	<b>11.4%</b>
<b>Itasca County</b>	<b>10,729</b>	<b>13.0%</b>
<b>Leech Lake Reservation</b>	<b>3,246</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Minnesota, State</b>	<b>1.286,894</b>	<b>7.6%</b>

Eligibility for free and reduced-price meals provides one of the few current indicators of near poverty. Program participation rates are available for individual school districts and aggregated by county. Income eligibility for these programs has a cut-off at 185% of poverty or \$34,040 annually for a family of four in 2000. Income eligibility for MFIP (Minnesota Family Investment Program) has a cut-off at 200% of the poverty line or \$12,948 annually for a family of four in 2000. Table 4 shows the percent of children under age 18 receiving free and reduced-price meals during the 2000-2001 school year and children receiving MFIP support during 2000 in the four counties surrounding the Leech Lake Reservation.

**Table 4: Federal Income Assistance Program Participation, 2000**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Free and reduced-price school meal participation 2000-2001</b>		<b>Children receiving MFIP assistance – 2001</b>	
<b>Beltrami County</b>	<b>4,119</b>	<b>36.2%</b>	<b>2,569</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Cass County</b>	<b>2,489</b>	<b>36.7%</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>11.9%</b>
<b>Hubbard County</b>	<b>1,231</b>	<b>27.3%</b>		
<b>Itasca County</b>	<b>2,668</b>	<b>24.9%</b>		
<b>Minnesota, State</b>	<b>222,908</b>	<b>26.5%</b>		

On average across the four counties, 1.2 times as many children participated in school meal subsidies compared to the average for all Minnesota counties (4-county average of 31.3% compared to 26.5% for Minnesota). Higher than average rates could be the result of greater poverty in the 4-county region and/or show a greater willingness on the part of families in the region to participate in this federal program. Sections of both the Red Lake and the Leech Lake Indian Reservation are located in Beltrami County and this could account for the higher participation in this county.

The planning department of the Leech Lake Reservation indicated that generally rates for Cass County are the best indicators of program participation on the Reservation. These indicators suggest that in 2000, children on the Leech Lake Reservation were almost twice as likely to participate in federal income assistance programs with income eligibility at or near poverty compared to average participation rates for Minnesota.

As indicated above, the 2000 Census shows an increase in population for the Leech Lake Reservation. The Director of Leech Lake Head Start speculates that since welfare reform, more low-income families of Ojibwe descent have returned to the Reservation to raise their children and rely on the support of tribal and county services.

## REGIONAL ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Personal income and unemployment rates reflect in part the economic strength of the four county areas and the Leech Lake Reservation. As shown in Table 5, the per capita income of residents in Cass, Beltrami, Hubbard and Itasca Counties in the 2000 Census ranked 8th, 13th, 15th and 17th lowest respectively, out of Minnesota's 87 counties. The Leech Lake Reservation per capita income is ranked as 5th of the four-county average. The largest industries on the Leech Lake Reservation are educational services, health and social services, arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services, retail trade and construction respectively, traditionally offering low wage earning positions. These indicators reflect that employment opportunities and personal income for the Reservation lag far behind the rest of the state, making it very difficult for families on the Reservation to break the cycle of poverty.

**Table 5: Per Capita Income and Unemployment Rates by County**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Per Capita Income 2000 Census</b>	<b>Unemployment Rate</b>
<b>Leech Lake Reservation</b>	<b>13,103</b>	<b>10.7%</b>
<b>Beltrami County</b>	<b>15,497</b>	<b>5.3%</b>
<b>Cass County</b>	<b>17,717</b>	<b>5.6%</b>
<b>Hubbard County</b>	<b>18,115</b>	<b>4.8%</b>
<b>Itasca County</b>	<b>17,717</b>	<b>7.9%</b>
<b>Minnesota, State</b>	<b>23,198 11<sup>th</sup> in Nation</b>	<b>4.7%</b>

## **Results from the Early Childhood Parent Survey**

An open-ended question on the Early Childhood Survey asked parents to respond to what their greatest hopes for their children were for the future. One of the top three most frequently mentioned responses to this question by parents was to obtain financial stability. Many parents shared the following hopes and aspirations targeting better employment and economic stability as being highly important. Some of the target responses included:

- To be able to show my children self sufficiency and how to handle money
- To obtain and enjoy employment that provides a good salary
- To become financially stable and debt free.

## **Related Findings from Community Focus Groups**

Parents in the focus groups expressed concerns about limited employment opportunities and cited issues related to jobs or the economic security of families. Some of the issues expressed included:

- In the outer communities, the necessity of having to travel long distances to job opportunities posed a huge challenge for many individuals
- Other parents felt that nepotism exists in relationship to employment on the reservation
- Parents felt that there should be training in place to teach job skills inclusive of resume preparation

# CHAPTER 3 COMMUNITY AND FAMILY LIFE

## COMMUNITY STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

Results from the Early Childhood Parent Survey

Parents responding to the Early Childhood Parent Survey were asked to choose three attributes of their communities they considered to be its greatest strengths and its greatest challenges. Table 6 and 7, respectively, show parents' most frequently selected strengths and challenges for communities' within the Leech Lake Reservation.

**Table 6: Parents' Determination of Strengths**

Surveys Completed	Greatest Strengths	% of Respondents	2 <sup>nd</sup> Greatest Strengths	% of Respondents	3 <sup>rd</sup> Greatest Strength	% of Respondents
91	Family Togetherness	27%	Community Support	19%	Employment	13%

**Table 7: Parents' Determination of Community Challenges**

Surveys Completed	Greatest Challenge	% of Respondents	2 <sup>nd</sup> Greatest Challenge	% of Respondents	3 <sup>rd</sup> Greatest Challenge	% of Respondents
91	Drug Use	15%	Youth Violence	10%	School support	9%

More than one-third of parents responding to the survey agreed that the two greatest strengths in their communities were family togetherness and community support. Other parents (between one-fourth and one-half) felt similar about the challenges facing communities across the Reservation, citing concerns about violence, drug and alcohol usage as being the top three challenges existing throughout their communities.

Parents cited that there was a need to work on issues to increase the safety in their communities. Their hopes included the desire to raise their children in communities free from violence, drug and alcohol abuse and other destructive lifestyles. Parents responding to the survey mentioned youth violence and drug and alcohol use as part of their safety concerns for their children. Parent responses included the following:

"Just to live in a better environment and not one that's being wasted by drugs and little wanna-be thugs."

"To be able to raise my children in a safe environment."

### **Related Findings from Parent Focus Groups**

Parents of young children participating in focus groups in communities throughout the Leech Lake Reservation also discussed the strengths and challenges facing their communities. The major themes related to community strengths and challenges from focus group discussions are as follows:

#### **Community Strengths**

- Family togetherness
- Community support
- Employment opportunities

#### **Community Challenges**

- Drug use
- Youth Violence Issues (Gang activity, teenage drinking and school drop-out rates)
- School support/drop out rate

Overall, parents participating in focus groups and parents surveyed voiced concerns about youth violence, drugs, gangs and alcohol abuse in their communities. Focus group participants were also concerned about the availability of affordable, quality child care, availability of child care programs and organized activities for young children and youth.

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND YOUTH VIOLENCE**

Information on the county level supports many of parents' concerns about the usage of alcohol and drugs and youth violence on the Reservation. As shown on Table 8, in 1996 when data was last published, Cass County had the highest rate of DWI (Driving While Intoxicated) arrests of the four counties surrounding the Leech Lake Reservation and the highest rate of drug arrests for the same time period (but slightly below the state average). In contrast, the 1997 juvenile arrest rate for Cass County was well below the other four county arrest rates and all counties were considerably lower than the average juvenile arrest rate for Minnesota.

These indicators are only crude measures of community safety and in large part reflect the effectiveness of each county's law enforcement system. The extent to which these rates accurately reflect the level of alcohol and drug abuse and youth criminal behavior depends on the manpower and policies of each law enforcement system and their diligence in enforcing traffic and drug violations as well as juvenile offenses.

**Table 8: DWI, Drug and Juvenile Arrest Rates by County**

	<b>DWI Arrest Rate (per 1000)1996</b>	<b>Drug Arrest rate (per1000) – 1996</b>	<b>Juvenile Arrest Rate (per 1000) -1997</b>
<b>Beltrami County</b>	<b>16.00</b>	<b>18.69</b>	<b>15.31</b>
<b>Cass County</b>	<b>35.14</b>	<b>21.99</b>	<b>8.96</b>
<b>Hubbard County</b>	<b>15.38</b>	<b>17.71</b>	<b>11.90</b>
<b>Itasca County</b>	<b>14.86</b>	<b>20.75</b>	<b>21.18</b>
<b>Minnesota</b>	<b>5.94</b>	<b>28.57</b>	<b>39.40</b>

## FAMILY STABILITY

The prevalence of criminal behavior related to alcohol, drugs and violence impacts whole communities as well as individual families on the Reservation. While 23% of parent's surveyed felt family togetherness was a strength in their communities, other parents and grandparent/guardians surveyed expressed concerns about keeping their families together or reuniting children with their parents.

The Minnesota Children's Report Card 2000 examines four indicators as measures of family support and stability - children placed out of the home, children abused or neglected, public school transfers and births to teens. Table 9 shows how each of the four counties overlapping the Leech Lake Reservation rated on these indicators in 2000.

**Table 9: Child placement, abuse/neglect, school transfers and teen birth rates by county.**

	<b>Out of home Placements – 2000</b>		<b>Children Abused &amp; Neglected – 2000</b>		<b>School Transfers 2000 – 2001</b>	
<b>Beltrami County</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>2.04%</b>	<b>1,138</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>3,060</b>	<b>38.2%</b>
<b>Cass County</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>4.16%</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>20.5%</b>
<b>Hubbard County</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>2.33%</b>	<b>981</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>12.6%</b>
<b>Itasca County</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>2.89%</b>	<b>2,235</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>1,214</b>	<b>16.2%</b>
<b>Minnesota, State - All Children</b>	<b>17,587</b>	<b>1.37%</b>	<b>9,876</b>	<b>.77</b>	<b>124,902</b>	

	<b>Birth to Mother under 18 - 2000</b>	
<b>Beltrami County</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>4.6%</b>
<b>Cass County</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4.3%</b>
<b>Hubbard County</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8.5%</b>
<b>Itasca County</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>3.2%</b>
<b>Minnesota, State - All Children</b>	<b>1,797</b>	<b>2.6%</b>

Cass County had higher than the state average on all four indicators of family stability. Cass County's percentage for children placed outside the home was more than twice the state average, and could represent a higher incidence of family problems and/or stronger enforcement of child protection laws through county social services. Hubbard County had the highest rate of teen births and Beltrami County had the highest rate of school transfers. During childhood, frequently changing schools has been associated with delinquency, depression, teen pregnancy and dropping out of school.

## **Results from the Early Childhood Survey**

Families were asked to respond to where they turned to seek help when in crisis or in need of assistance. Total of 36 respondents (54%) said they sought out family members for support and 26 respondents (39%) said they turned to friends. Others cited co-workers, health care professional and clergy as being supportive services they had sought out in time of need.

One parent cited her greatest hope for the future was to promote family stability and togetherness and expressed the importance of raising children to be respectful, loving, happy and healthy. Other parents shared the following reflections:

"To stay close as a family and maintain our healthy drug and alcohol free living. Our family always puts each other first in priorities. "

“To have happy, healthy, well-adjusted kids to be part of the community.”

" To encourage their confidence in personal development and instill native values so that they learn what is important to live happy and healthy lives. "

## **Related Findings from Parent Focus Groups**

Parents in the focus groups shared strategies to support families residing in their communities. Parents targeted the following services as being needs that are not met in their communities due to a lack of available services. Their suggestions include:

- Develop a transportation system that is affordable so families are able to access services and travel to places they need to go.
- Youth and children need more educational and culture related activities that are monitored by adults who can provide mentorship and role modeling skills.
- Need an ECFE (Early Childhood Family Education) and there is a need for playgrounds and places where families can be in a safe environment.

## **FAMILIES CHILD CARE CONCERNS**

### **Results from the Early Childhood Survey**

Overall, 28% of parents who responded to the Early Childhood Survey said they had children in child care. Table 10 shows the types of arrangements these parents reported using for child care. Sixty two percent (62%) of the parents who had children in child care said they used family members as care providers and 5% were using unlicensed care. These two categories are generally referred to as informal child care. Twelve percent (12%) of those surveyed who had children in licensed family or center care .

**Table 10: Types of child care arrangements for children in child care**

<b>Child Care Providers</b>	<b>Children in Child Care</b>	
<b>Older Siblings</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>Other Relatives</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>49%</b>
<b>Unlicensed Home Care</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Licensed Family Child Care</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Licensed Child Care Center</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>no response</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6%</b>

**Related Findings from Parent Focus Groups**

Parents who participated in focus groups reflected on the problems they experienced trying to find quality child care in their communities. They also shared their suggestions for improving the accessibility of quality child care. The following are some of their suggestions and concerns:

**Problems finding quality child care**

- There is a need for trained child care staff/teachers-staff need to have a passion for working with children and not view it as just a job
- Waiting lists with the county is too long, so we are forced to find someone we don't have to pay to watch our children.
- The location of child care is too far away – transportation is an issue.

**Suggestions for improvement**

- Increase wages for child care workers/teachers and expand on Head Start Services (Early Head Start)
- Have a Dikinaagan satellite child care in Ball Club.
- Make information more accessible to potential child care providers.

## CHAPTER 4 CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL, HEALTH, NUTRITIONAL AND SOCIAL NEEDS

### EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

#### Indicators of Early Educational Success

Early intervention programs like Early Head Start and Early Childhood Special Education (interagency early intervention services are referred to as Part C) are educational interventions designed to address the needs of disadvantaged infants and toddlers. There is presently no Early Head Start on the Leech Lake Reservation. All infants, toddlers and preschool children eligible for Early Childhood Special Education (ESCE) receive services through the County Public Health Department and/or their local public school district in Minnesota. There are eight public school districts that serve children on the Leech Lake Reservation and the number of children ages 0-2 and ages 3-5 receiving ECSE services through each of these districts is shown in Table 11.

**Table 11: Children receiving Early Childhood Special Education by school district**

School Districts Serving the Reservation	Infant and Toddlers Who Receive Early Intervention Services – Part C Ages 0 - , Dec 1999	Preschool Children Who received Early Childhood Special Education Ages 3-5, Dec 1999	Total
Bemidji	27 .48	14 .25	5,605
Blackduck	4 .46	12 .14	863
Cass Lake	4 .38	24 .23	1,051
Deer River	4 .27	20 .18	1,124
Grand Rapids	23 .54	59 1.38	4,285
Laporte	1 .42	5 2.10	238
Remer/Longville	2 .34	7 1.20	584
Walker	2 .17	10 .83	1,208
<b>Total</b>	<b>66 .44</b>	<b>151 1.01</b>	<b>14,958</b>

To compare across districts, a rate was calculated based on the number of preschool children receiving ECSE services compared to the district's total school enrollment (Table 11). Grand Rapids, Cass Lake and Deer River school districts served the greatest number of preschool children with disabilities per enrollment. In addition to serving the communities of Cass Lake and Deer River these two districts serve the Reservation communities of Ball Club, Inger, Squaw Lake, Bena and Pennington; most of the northern two-thirds of the Reservation.

## **Results from the Early Childhood Survey**

Parents' surveyed included education as one of their top three hopes for the future for their children and themselves. They shared the following hopes about ensuring quality education for all children and for themselves on the Leech Lake Reservation.

"To have my children enjoy their educational experiences so they are eager to go on learning. "

"To see my children graduate from high school/and go on to college"

"To finish college so I can have a better job to support my children."

## **Related Finding from the Parent Focus Groups**

Focus group participants talked about their educational concerns for their children and themselves. Their concerns were at times specific to their community or school district as follows:

- Walker school does not have kindergarten every day.
- Would like a program for children who are young three years olds to help them transition - they are not ready socially
- Need computers and tutors in the communities.
- Need college preparation courses and follow-up from guidance counselors so students don't get lost in the system.
- Teach students better study habits early.
- Would like Tribal College classes brought into the community or transportation supports to attend the Tribal College.

## **HEALTH AND NUTRITIONAL NEEDS**

### **Indicators of Healthy Infants and Toddlers**

Research suggests that preparing children for success in school begins at birth. Indicators such as incidence of children born at low birth weight or born to teen mothers are used as measures of early learning readiness. In Cass County in 2000, the proportion of low birth weight newborns to total births was 5.4 %, compared to 6.1 % for the State of Minnesota overall (see Table 12). Also in 2000, the percentage of teen births in Cass County was 4.3, almost double the overall State percentage of 2.6. Compared to children born of older parents, children born to teen mothers are more likely to have poor school performance, lower educational expectations and more behavioral problems.

Health data from the Minnesota Children's Report Card 2002 shows that children in Cass County are below the state percentages on indicators of on-time immunizations and low birth weight newborns and considerably above on the indicator of infant mortality (Table 12). Infant mortality is used as an indirect measure of the adequacy of prenatal care. High infant mortality rates are also often associated with higher rates of births to teen mothers, who are more likely to receive inadequate prenatal health care and have children at risk for low birth weight and infant mortality.

**Table 12: On-time immunizations, low birth weight and infant mortality by county**

	<b>On-Time Immunization* 1997</b>	<b>Low Birth weight Newborns, 1999</b>		<b>Infant mortality – 2000 (rate per 1,000 live births)</b>
<b>Beltrami County</b>	<b>61.5%</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>7.5%</b>
<b>Cass County</b>	<b>62.6%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>9.0%</b>
<b>Hubbard County</b>	<b>59.6%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>5.5%</b>
<b>Itasca County</b>	<b>68.6%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>6.2%</b>
<b>Minnesota, State</b>	<b>68.4%</b>	<b>4,015</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>5.6%</b>

\*Represents the number of kindergartners (and percent of all kindergartners) who were up to date with immunizations at 24 months of age.

### **Indicators of Children's Nutritional Status**

The Center for Disease Control's Pediatric Nutritional Surveillance Program provides information on the nutritional status of children who participate in WIC (the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children). Information is available for the Leech Lake Reservation and Minnesota overall for 2002. Table 13 shows the incidence of childhood obesity (high weight for height) among children participating in WIC on the Reservation was almost twice as high as the state average (21.9% for Reservation children compared to 12.1% for the state overall). The prevalence of low weight for height and anemia among children receiving WIC on the Reservation was similar to state averages, Childhood obesity is a form of malnutrition and is generally associated with poor eating habits and inactivity, which can increase children's risk of diabetes, heart disease and other health problems later in life.

**Table 13: Prevalence of low/high weight for height and low hemoglobin**

<b>WIC Participants 2002</b>	<b>Prevalence of Low Weight for Height (&lt;5%)</b>	<b>Prevalence of High Weight for Height (&gt;95%)</b>	<b>Prevalence of Low Hemoglobin (&lt;5%)</b>
<b>Leech Lake Reservation</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>3.8</b>
<b>Minnesota, All American Indian</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>11.3</b>
<b>Minnesota, Overall</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>4.81</b>

## **Related Findings from Parent Focus Groups**

Parents participating in focus groups addressed the problems they encountered when trying to access health care services. The major concerns of most of the groups include:

- No transportation for appointments and do not have accurate information on operational hours of the clinic and concerns about the sanitary conditions of the clinic
- Need a fitness center for kids and adults and classes for childhood obesity.
- Need Classes or sessions for parents to provide information on early childhood development

## **SOCIAL AND RECREATION NEEDS**

### **Related Findings from Parent Focus Groups**

The following information about the recreational and social needs of children on the Leech Lake Reservation comes directly from parents participating in focus groups. Most of their concerns related to the need for organized and well-monitored activities for children of all ages. Their concerns and suggestions were as follows:

- Lack of collaboration between Head Start, the Youth Programs, Local Indian Education and the Local Indian Councils.
- Need a gym or fitness center, playground, ball field, swimming pool and more activities for young children and youth
- Very little parent or community involvement.

## CHAPTER 5

# EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICE NETWORK

## EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTICPATION

### Results from the Early Childhood Survey

Families who responded to the Early Childhood Survey were asked to identify the early childhood services they utilized throughout the past year. Table 14 shows that while 79% of respondents participated in Head Start and 56% used WIC services, only around 10% of respondents took advantage of Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE), infant/toddler health (Baby Tracks) services or community education. These differences suggest that parents who use one service are not necessarily linked with or are aware of or have easy access to other early childhood services on the Reservation. These figures also suggest that stronger coordination and partnerships are needed between early childhood services.

**Table 14: # and % of surveyed families participating in Early Childhood Programs**

<b>Leech Lake WIC</b>		<b>Baby Tracks</b>		<b>Early Childhood Family Education</b>		<b>Head Start</b>		<b>Community Education</b>	
<b>40</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11%</b>

Parents targeted the following as services and activities that they would like to see offered (by community of residence):

### Cass Lake

- Mental health services (child & adult play therapy)
- Recreational activities for families/neighborhoods and the community
- Parenting classes targeting young parents
- Expand and introduce children to new activities (golf, snow boarding, drum & dance)
- Preventive education on drugs and alcohol and its affects on children

### Onigum

- Cultural Activities
- Individuals to teach the language
- Community education and parenting classes
- Karate/dance brought to community-to alleviate transportation issues
- Money to purchase supplies for elders to quilt
- Bike paths and exercise equipment
- Community Health Representative (CHR)
- New Head Start building

**Inger**

- Child care center
- Culture classes/activities for young children
- Efforts to bring services to outlying areas of the reservation
- Boys & Girls Club
- Court advocates-youth
- Drug & alcohol prevention program
- Youth center

**Bena**

- Childcare

**Ball Club**

- Classes for parents (GED)
- Dance & community Pow-Wows
- Tobacco prevention information & other resource information
- Baby tracks program
- Family Fun Nights

**Kego Lake**

- ENP
- Head Start & WIC
- CHR worker and youth worker
- Summer food program
- Informational presentation/reservation programs
- Youth program for all ages
- Incentives for children and families who succeed in school
- Family fun night
- Parenting Classes

**Sugar Point/Battle Point**

- On-site WIC, Diabetes, Nest & Baby Tracks
- Reliable transportation system to get to appointments
- Cultural activities and classes
- New Playground equipment

Parents were also asked to identify the barriers that affect them from accessing services (Table 15). The most frequently mentioned reason was lack of time or that the time of day the activity was offered was not convenient for their family. The "Other" reasons parents shared for not accessing services related to their work hours, a lack of money and a lack of awareness of the event. Parents most frequently cited evenings after 6:00 p.m. as the best time for service access.

**Table 15: Reasons keeping families from attending services**

<b>Surveyed Parents Said</b>		
Not aware of services	50	16%
Distance to services	38	12%
Rules & Eligibility	35	11%
Waiting lists	33	10%
Transportation	28	9%
Child Care not available	24	8%
Other	104	33%

### **ADEQUACY OF AND BARRIERS TO FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES**

The Early Childhood Survey asked parents to rate the adequacy of a variety of different family support services that may or may not be available in their communities. Appendix D provides a complete analysis of parents' responses to this question.

Table 16 shows the five services that parents gave the highest ratings. Only two services received a rating of 1.0 or over (on the 4 point scale, a 2 equaled "poor" and a 4 equaled excellent) most likely because on average almost half of the respondents (46%) said they were unaware of these services or these services were not available in their communities. The five highest rated services received a "good" rating from about 30% of all respondents and an excellent rating from about 12%. These services included Child Care & Development, Education, Literacy & Mentoring, Law Enforcement, Community & Church Organizations and Public Health, respectively. Those services that received the lowest ratings included Substance Abuse & Treatment, Crisis Intervention & Counseling, Family Support and Mental Health. (see Appendix D).

### **IMPROVEMENTS TO THE LEECH LAKE HEAD START AND DIKINAAGAN CHILD CARE CENTER SERVICES**

Parents surveyed were asked to list which areas of the Head Start and Dikinaagan Child Care Center system they felt could use improvement. They were also asked to list suggestions for those improvements. Of the 52 families whose children were enrolled in the Head Start, about 25% listed "Culture" as the area needing the most improvement. Of the 19 families whose children were enrolled in the Dikinaagan Child Care Center, almost half of the respondents listed "Classroom Environments" as the area that needed the most improvement. Table 18 shows the top three areas that respondents felt needed improvement.

<b>Head Start Families</b>			<b>Dikinaagan Families</b>		
<b>Culture</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>Education/Literacy</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Parent training</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>Culture</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Male involvement</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14%</b>

Families with children enrolled in Head Start listed the following suggestions to improve services in the top three categories they felt needed improvement:

- *Sponsor culture & language classes for families (Culture)*
- *Provide transportation for parents to attend meetings and training (Family/Community Partnerships)*
- *Invite elders to come in to talk with the children (Culture)*
- *Improve communication with parents (Health & Family/Community Partnerships)*
- *Improve breakfast and nutrition for the children (Culture & Nutrition)*
- *More Pow- Wows for children during class time (Culture)*
- *Provide more cultural activities into the classroom (Culture & Curriculum)*
- *To have more involvement with the community (Family/Community Partnerships)*
- *Would like to have Community Education programs offered in the communities (Family/Community Partnerships)*
- *More communication with Disabilities Coordinator (Health)*
- *Follow up on ears & eyes - need improvement on hearing, vision and speech before kindergarten (Health).*
- *Provide more feedback on disabilities and provide follow-up(Health)*
- *Provide male involvement in the classroom (Curriculum)*

Families with children enrolled in Dik-in-aa-gan Child Care Center listed the following suggestions to improve services in the top three categories they felt needed improvement:

- *Staff need to be responsive to change (All categories)*
- *Incorporate Native American music for the children into the curriculum(Curriculum & Education/Literacy)*
- *Provide space where children can experience a quiet time (Classroom Environments)*
- *Make classrooms more child appropriate (Classroom Environments)*
- *Use curriculum throughout the day (Curriculum)*
- *Better designed center areas/stations (Classroom Environments)*
- *Enhance Curriculum – make it fun to learn (Curriculum)*
- *Discard/remove unused items- too cluttered (Classroom Environments)*
- *Read more stories (Education/Literacy)*
- *Enhance and develop strategies to advertise family events in the communities*

## **SERVICE PROVIDERS'S ASSESSMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES**

The Community survey was mailed to 15 agencies that provide services to our targeted population group. Service providers' suggestions for improving the local service delivery system focused on increased collaboration and a system of communication. Three or more of the service agency providers mentioned sharing resources and training to improve the Local service delivery system.

When early childhood service providers responding to the provider survey were asked to identify the barriers that keep families from accessing needed services, the following three barriers received the highest average score respectively:

1. Transportation
2. Agency Location-Child Care Availability-Hours of Operation
3. Lack of Awareness

Service providers also mentioned other barriers they felt were problems for families on the Reservation which included the length of waiting lists, eligibility qualifications and a need for case management/follow-up.

In summary, parents and service providers were in agreement that the major barriers to accessing services for families are: 1), transportation/long distances to service centers 2) Location of services and 3) Lack of awareness of services.

## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As identified in the Early Childhood Survey, parents' three greatest hopes for the future are a reflection of the following priority areas that need to be addressed in the communities in which they live:

1. Increase the safety of local communities for children by reducing alcohol and drug use and youth violence, and by creating constructive recreational activities for all children.
2. Ensure availability of quality education for all children and their parents.
3. Promote family stability and togetherness, and provide supports to assist families raise responsible, respectful, loving; - happy and healthy children.

All three of these priorities, (child safety, education and family stability) are within the mission and goals of the Early Childhood Development program. Early Childhood Development leadership in combination with service providers throughout the local area working together can help direct community resources and offer creative solutions to address these priorities for families with young children on the Leech Lake Indian Reservation.

Other evidence relating to the needs of young children and their families located on the Leech Lake Reservation suggest that Leech Lake Early Childhood Development together with other early childhood service providers need to develop strategies to explore innovative programs and services to address these critical concerns:

- Safe, affordable quality child care for working families
- Early educational interventions for at-risk infants and toddlers, including Early Head Start
- A communication system for service providers with resource sharing and collaborative efforts that will promote an array of seamless service to families

Striving to make continual improvements in coordination, communication and public awareness within the early childhood service system families will ensure better access to needed services. The Leech Lake Early Childhood Development Center has made a concerted effort to bring its services closer making services more readily available to the small outlying communities where families live on the Reservation. Expansion of Early Childhood Development's partnerships to include other family support systems, health and child care programs; communities and families across the reservation will strengthen connections with the area's other early childhood services and enhance the service network. The goal is to collaboratively work together with these partners to develop strategies to strengthen and enhance availability and ensure access to supportive services to all families residing on the Leech Lake Reservation. The importance of this work is immense; yet vital to ensure brighter futures for families and children located across the Leech Lake Reservation and to assist parents in realizing their visions for their children.

## **LIST OF REFERENCES**

**Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning. Early Childhood Special Education Enrollment by District. July 22, 2003. Fax Transmission from Michelle Jones, Division of Special Education, 651-582-8577.**

**Minnesota Department of Health. Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants & Children. July 23, 2003. Phone conversation with Mary Frances Guiney, State WIC Office, 651-281-9921.**

**Minnesota Planning. Children's Report Card by County, 2000. July 21, 2003.**  
<http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us/demography/prh.htm>

**Minnesota Planning. County Population Estimates, 2000. July 17, 2003**  
<http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us/datanet\veb>

**Minnesota Planning. County Unemployment Statistics, 2000. July 17, 2003**  
<http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us/datanetweb>

**Minnesota Planning. Substance Abuse Monitoring System, 2000. July 17, 2003**  
<http://www.mnplan.statemn.us/datanetweb>

**U.S. Census Bureau. Leech Lake Reservation Income and Poverty Status in 1989: 1990. DATE.**  
[http://factfinder.census.gov/j\\_dads.ui.fac.CommunityFactsViewvPae?TABH=3\\$TABT](http://factfinder.census.gov/j_dads.ui.fac.CommunityFactsViewvPae?TABH=3$TABT)

**U. S. Census Bureau. Leech Lake Reservation Population and Housing - Detailed Tables. DATE.**  
[http://factfinder.census.gov/j\\_a\\_va\\_prod/dads.ui.pdq.PopBuildQueryViewShowTableViewTable](http://factfinder.census.gov/j_a_va_prod/dads.ui.pdq.PopBuildQueryViewShowTableViewTable)

Appendix A

**FAMILY SURVEY INSTRUMENT**  
**Leech Lake Early Childhood Development**  
**Community Needs Assessment**  
**2006**

Your feedback is needed to improve Early Childhood Services on the Leech Lake Reservation. Early Childhood Services include educational, health, social and other support services for families with children under the age of 5 years old. Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. Your responses are very important and will be kept strictly confidential. Please fill out only one (1) survey per family.

1. What category best describes your household? (check all that apply)

- Parent working in the home                       Parent working outside the home  
 Parent in school (College/Vo-Tech)             Teen parent – in school or working  
 Foster parent     Grandparent guardian  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What title best describes you? (check only one)

- Single parent             Two parent family     Grandparent  
 Foster Parent             Child Care Provider             Guardian

3. List the community that you live in: \_\_\_\_\_.

4. What are the ages of the children in your household? Please put the appropriate number of children next to the age group.

- 0-2                       3-5                       6-12                       13-18

5. Do you have children in Head Start?             Yes                       No

6. To help us better plan for the future, what Head Start program option would best meet your needs?

- Full day / four days             Full day / five days  
 Part day / four days             Part day / five days

7. If your child is enrolled in Leech Lake Head Start, what areas of the program do you feel could use improvement?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education/Literacy       | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent Training / Involvement        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation           | <input type="checkbox"/> Nutrition & Meal Services            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Culture                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Assessment & Follow – Ups     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health / Behavior | <input type="checkbox"/> Disabilities Assessment & Follow-Ups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum               | <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Environment                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male Involvement         |   |

8. Please list suggested improvements for each of the categories you checked above:

1. \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_.

9. What would make Head Start more welcoming to the Male population? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

10. Would you be willing to participate in a Male Involvement Committee?  Yes  No

11. Do you have children in Child Care?  Yes  No

12. If yes, what type of child care arrangement do you use?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Older siblings       | <input type="checkbox"/> Relatives                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unlicensed Home Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Licensed Family Child Care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care Centers   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____               |

13. How many hours / days a week is child care needed? \_\_\_\_\_ Hours \_\_\_\_\_ Days

14. Check any of the following programs that your family participates in:

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start             | <input type="checkbox"/> ECFE          | <input type="checkbox"/> Dik-in-aa-gan child care center |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LL Subsidy Program     | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Ed. | <input type="checkbox"/> WIC                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infant Toddler program | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____. |  |

15. If your child is enrolled in the Dik-in-aa-gon Child Care Center, what areas do you feel could use improvement?

Education / Literacy       Nutrition & Meal Services       Culture  
 Health updates       Classroom Environment       Curriculum  
 Mental Health / Behavior       Other: \_\_\_\_\_

16. Please list suggested improvements for each of the categories you checked above:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

17. What Early Childhood Services would you like to see offered in your community?  
(example: Literacy, Family Fun Nights, Trainings, Cultural Activities etc.)

A \_\_\_\_\_  
B \_\_\_\_\_  
C \_\_\_\_\_

18. What would keep you from attending these activities?

Time (what time is best ? \_\_\_\_\_)       Child Care  
 Transportation       Other: \_\_\_\_\_

19. What are the three (3) greatest strengths in your community.

<input type="checkbox"/> Church Support/Involvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Family togetherness
<input type="checkbox"/> School Support/Involvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Safety
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Support / Involvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment
<input type="checkbox"/> Town Spirit & Cooperation	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Activities
<input type="checkbox"/> Child Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing
<input type="checkbox"/> Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Drug & Alcohol Treatment/Prevention
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	

20. What are the three (3) greatest challenges in your community.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Safety   | <input type="checkbox"/> School support / drop-out  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing           | <input type="checkbox"/> Job or Vocational training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation    | <input type="checkbox"/> Employment                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Support | <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health     | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Togetherness        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teen Pregnancy    | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Violence             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation        | <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health            | <input type="checkbox"/> Drug Abuse                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gangs / Violence  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____               |

21. Please list how adequate the following services are in your community:

0 = Don't know    1 = Not available    2 = Poor    3 = Good    4 = Excellent

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care & Development         | <input type="checkbox"/> Child Welfare & Foster Care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community & Church Organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crisis Intervention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Culture & Art               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education, Literacy & Mentoring  | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Support Services     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health & Services         | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Health Services      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information & Referral           | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Aid                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Substance Abuse Treatment        | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Assistance             | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Clubs                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                     |  |

22. What do you consider to be barriers that prevent families from getting needed services?  
(check only those that apply to you and your family)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not aware of existing services         | <input type="checkbox"/> Waiting list are too long         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Services are too far away from home    | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation is not available   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agencies not open at convenient time   | <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care in not available       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agencies do not give clear information | <input type="checkbox"/> Agency fees are too high          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rules & eligibility exclude people     | <input type="checkbox"/> Agency staff are rude/insensitive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concerns about confidentiality         | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncomfortable with "outsiders"    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____.                          |  |

23. Have any of your children been diagnosed with a special need?  Yes  No

If yes, what is the age of the child/children? \_\_\_\_\_.

What type of disability \_\_\_\_\_.

24. What agency / agencies are you receiving special needs services from? \_\_\_\_\_

25. Are you satisfied with these services? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No Why / Why not: \_\_\_\_\_

26. Please list any developmental concerns you may have for your child/children.

27. Who or where do you turn for help most often? (check only those that apply to you and your family).

\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_ Clergy \_\_\_ Friends \_\_\_ Health care providers

\_\_\_ Social Services \_\_\_ Co-workers \_\_\_ Family members \_\_\_ School services

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

28. What are and your family's greatest hope for the future? \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your help with the survey!

Appendix B

**SURVEY INSTRUMENT**

Leech Lake Early Childhood Development  
Community Needs Assessment  
2006

**Your feedback is needed to improve early childhood services on the Leech Lake Reservation. Early Childhood services include education, health, social, child care and other support services for families with children. Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. Your responses are very important and will be kept strictly confidential.** Name and Address are optional they will be used to share information on program activities. Please return to Becky Littlewolf, Leech Lake Early Childhood Program by 10/9/06.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are an organization employee, do you work with families?            Y        N

**Organization:**  
**Contact Number:**

What community do you live in? **Ball Club, Onigum, Mission etc.**

Please list the title which best describes you: **(Parent, grandparent, child care provider, organization employee, committee member etc.)**

What are the strengths of your community?

What are the challenges of your Community?

What are your concerns about finding and keeping employment in your community?

What are some of the agencies and services that you use or aware of in the communities you serve that would be useful to families?

What are some ways to improve the availability and quality of services to families?

If you use child care what type do you use?

Family Child Care                       Child Care Center                       Older Sibling  
 Friend     Relative     Other

What are some ways to improve the availability and quality of child care?

**What areas of the Child Care Services program do you feel could use improvement?**

Technical Assistance                       Outreach & Public Relations  
 Licensing Orientation                       Learning Lounge  
 Grants Program                               Subsidy Program  
 Compliance/Monitoring                       Training

**Please List suggested improvements for each of the categories you checked above.**

**Dikinaagan is another area of the Leech Lake Early Childhood Program what parts of the program do you feel could use improvement?**

Curriculum                                       Family & Community Partnership  
 Education/Literacy                               Culture  
 Classroom Environments                               Outreach & Public Relations  
 Nutrition & Meal Service                               Transportation  
 Have not used Service

**Please list suggested improvements for each of the categories you checked above.**

**Head Start is another area of the Leech Lake Early Childhood Program what parts of the program do you feel could use improvement?**

Curriculum                                       Family & Community Partnership  
 Education/Literacy                               Culture  
 Classroom Environments                               Male Involvement  
 Outreach & Public Relations                               Nutrition & Meal Service  
 Transportation                                       Health Services  
 Have not used service

**Please list suggested improvements for each of the categories you checked above.**