

Family Support Services for Health, Mental Health and Nutrition

POLICY:

Delegate Programs and Model City collaborate with parents to promote children's health and well-being by providing medical, oral, nutrition, and mental health education support services.

This policy relates to [Head Start Performance Standards 45 CFR Part 1302.46](#)

PROCEDURE:

1. Training on each of the components is provided to parents/guardians at regular parent meetings and other planned program activities. (see *Parent Meetings policy*)
2. Parents/guardians receive adequate notice and support services to facilitate their attendance at meetings/trainings.
3. Parents/guardians are provided resources and referrals are made for in appropriate areas.
4. At a minimum, staff will cover the following topics within their medical & dental support for parents:
 - (a) During the enrollment process while completing the child's health history form, staff will assist parents in understanding how to enroll and participate in a system of ongoing family health care. They will encourage parents to keep their child up-to-date on all health matters including requirements set forth by the Head Start program.
 - (b) Parents will be encouraged to become active partners in their children's medical and dental health care process and accompany their child to medical and dental appointments for on-going care.
 - (c) Parents will be provided with the opportunity to learn the principles of medical and dental health, emergency first-aid, occupational and environmental hazards and safety practices for use in the classroom and in the home. In addition to information on general topics, specific information to meet the health needs of individual children is made available to the extent possible.

- (d) Staff will assist families in understanding how to access health insurance, treatment needs, and services their child will need or receive in Head Start.
5. The nutrition education program provides, at a minimum:
- (a) During the Family Assessment, the following topics are discussed: The importance of physical activity, healthy eating, the negative consequences of sugar-sweetened beverages, and how to select and prepare nutritious foods that meet the family's nutrition and food budget needs.
 - (b) Parents/guardians have opportunities to discuss the nutritional status of their child with staff during the enrollment process (including the health history), the family assessment, home visits, and any other time the parent/guardian has concerns.
6. The mental health education program provides, at a minimum:
- (a) A variety of group opportunities for parents and program staff to identify and discuss issues related to their child's mental health.
 - (b) Individual opportunities for parents to discuss mental health issues related to their child and family with program staff.
 - (c) The active involvement of parents in planning and implementing any mental health interventions for their child.