

1304.41 Community Partnership Plan

The Family/Community Partnership Specialist will establish and maintain a partnering relationship with community agencies and businesses. This relationship will entail maintained, up-to-date knowledge of services that such agencies and businesses provide. The Family/Community Partnership Specialist will share such information with community agencies and participate with family resource agencies that assist parents and families with objectives and needs. Head Start confidentiality policies will always be followed. The Family/Community Partnership Specialist must ensure confidentiality of any personally identifiable data, info or records collected by Head Start. There will be equal protections to FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act).

The Family/Community Partnership Specialist will serve on various community action and outreach committees, i.e. Welfare Reform, Department of Children's Services, etc., in Van Buren County and local areas. Through partnerships and serving on committees, parents will be better served.

Documentation will be maintained to reflect such efforts. Formal and informal agreements will be established and documented to include, but not limited to, health care providers, TennCare representatives, mental health providers, nutritional services providers, disability services, family support services, child protective services and organizations and businesses that provide support and resources for parents and families.

Encouragement of volunteer participation from within the community will be a responsibility of the Family/Community Partnership Specialist. Volunteers will provide parents and families with additional resources and education to enhance and better reach lifestyles and family goals.

Multi-Services Advisory Committee:

Realizing that some Head Start families may have needs which cannot be met by existing community resources and services, the Family/Community Partnership Specialist, Health/Disability Specialist, and Education staff will be responsible for establishing and maintaining a Multi-Service Advisory Committee. The committee will be compiled of representatives from the community and agencies serving families in need of resources, Head Start staff and parents (members of the Policy Council). The committee will

provide information and input concerning needed services, such as resources of social services, health, and education needs in the community and will act as an advocacy group. The Advisory Committee will be trained and informed of each Head Start service area, performance standards, and pertinent regulations.

The Advisory Committee will meet at least two (2) times yearly, with additional meetings scheduled as circumstances or committee members deem necessary. The committee will provide input into areas of Health Services, Social Services, and Education. Planning, problem solving, and collaboration on new ideas can enhance the services provided by the program in these areas. One meeting should reflect training on the purpose of Multi-Service Advisory and reflect by-laws.

Staff will obtain any necessary documentation required for a child to enter the Head Start program. Staff will also assist with information dissemination, such as child's records for placement following Head Start. This will include staff assisting parents with necessary documentation required for entrance into public school (i.e. shot records, birth certificate, etc.).

Head Start Transition Staff will work closely with local school administration and officials to ensure all parents of children transitioning into the school system are informed and educated concerning enrollment requirements. Grantee and delegate agencies must establish and maintain procedures to support successful transitions for enrolled children and families from previous child care programs into Head Start and from Head Start into an elementary school system. All parents will be given the opportunity and encouraged to be involved in their child's transitioning to and from Head Start. Transition staff will also be responsible for Head Start children's record dissemination into the school system. Two-way communication should be established and maintained between Head Start and the school system to ensure services are established and ongoing for all Head Start children.

Staff will assist and participate in intervention meetings with LEA for children requiring additional assistance prior to entering the school system. Transition staff will work individually with high-risk children to better prepare them for entrance into the public school. Head Start staff and LEA teachers will work together to ensure children receive the services required

to prepare them for success. Staff will utilize joint efforts between the program and LEA for training, education, and advocacy for parents, children, and partnership participation.