

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (a)(4)& (5)

**Subject: Non Enrolled Children at Head Start**

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**Policy:**

Meetings and interactions with families must be respectful of each family's diversity.

**Procedure:**

1. Non-enrolled children may be allowed to attend parent activity days, meals, and special events at the Head Start center.
2. Any/ all non enrolled child must be in the direct supervision of parent/guardian at all times.
3. Non enrolled children are expected to follow and obey all Head Start rules and etiquette as set forth by Head Start staff.
4. Babies and toddlers will not be allowed to play on the playground or in the class room centers without direct approval from appropriate staff.
5. To ensure the safety of babies and toddlers while at the Head Start center, carriers, baby seats, and strollers should be used to provide the parent with an opportunity to participate in activities with their Head Start child.
6. Head Start Staff *cannot* provide supervision for non enrolled children
7. Any diapering or toileting supplies used at the center must be disposed of in a bag and placed outside in trash container.
8. Children in carriers Must NOT be placed on tables (this is to ensure the safety of the child) and must be directly supervised by parent or other designated adult at all times.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40

**Subject: Orientation of Parents**

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**Policy:**

Head Start/Early Head Start offers parent orientation will be provided to new and returning parents to allow them a better understanding of the program.

**Procedure:**

1. All staff members will be introduced to the parents.
2. The history and main components of Head Start/Early Head Start will be outlined for the parents.
3. Each family will receive or had received a copy of the Parent's Handbook and this will be reviewed at orientation.
4. Staff will explain attendance, absence, tardiness, disciplinary and withdrawal policies.
5. Staff will discuss parent's rights while emphasizing the responsibilities of being a Head Start/Early Head Start parent.
6. Staff will explain "in-kind" process and importance of parent participation and how families can volunteer.
7. Staff will provide parents contact numbers for any questions or concerns that arise.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (d)(1)

**Subject: Parent Committee Meetings**

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**Policy:**

Head Start/Early Head Start must provide parent involvement and education activities in addition to involving parents in program policy-making and operation of the program.

**Procedure:**

1. Each center will have a Parent Committee which will hold regular meetings at the center or a place mutually agreeable by the parent committee.
2. The Parent Meeting shall be conducted by the elected President of Parent Committee or designated person.
3. The elected Secretary will take minutes at each meeting, copies of the minutes will be submitted to Center Coordinator or Family Service Worker.
4. Whenever possible parent/child activities and parent meetings should be conducted on the same day.
5. A Parent Committee Notebook will be kept in the office, updated at all times with meeting agenda, minutes of meeting, sign-in sheet, and any handouts at meeting.
6. A copy of agenda, minutes, sign-in sheet, and handouts are to be sent to Education Specialist on monthly basis.
7. Meeting topic is documented on Parent Training Plan and must be presented at meeting.
8. Topic addressed at meeting is then filled in on plan indicating the date topic presented.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (g)(1)(2)

**Subject: Parent Grievance Policy**

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**Policy:**

Parents will be given an opportunity to be involved in community advocacy and to have all questions and concerns addressed in an efficient and timely manner.

**Procedure:**

1. The parent will first address the Center Coordinator with their concern or question.
2. A meeting with Center Coordinator and other designated staff will be held in an effort to resolve the matter.
3. If there is no resolution, the above parties will meet with the Head Start/Early Head Start Director in an attempt to answer the question or concern.
4. If no resolution is met at this level, the Head Start/Early Head Start Director and the parent with the concern will meet with the Executive Director of Tri-County Community Council in an attempt to reach a resolution.
5. If no resolution is met at this level, the concern or question will be presented at the Policy Council Meeting where the parent with the concern will present their views.
6. If there is no resolution from the Policy Council, the parent with the concern, the Executive Director, and Director of Head Start/Early Head Start will then meet with the Board of Directors of Tri-County Community Council.
7. The Board will listen to both sides of the issue and resolve the issue through their ruling on the matter.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnership P.S. 1304.40 (d)(1)(2)(3)**

**Subject: Parent Involvement, General**

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**Policy:**

In additions to involving parents in program policy-making and operations (1304.50), the program provides parent involvement and education activities that are responsive to the ongoing and expressed needs of the parents both as individuals and as members of a group.

**Procedure:**

1. At enrollment, the parent/guardian will complete a Family Interest Survey. From the survey, the Family Service Coordinator will identify areas of family interests, tabulate results, and identify agencies that can provide the needed information as needed. The results of the survey will be handled as follows:
  - ❖ Results will be placed on a Parent Training Plan with items scheduled to present monthly.
  - ❖ Individual families will be provided with the information they seek, or
  - ❖ If several families are interested in a specific topic, the Family Service Worker will plan a meeting, workshop, or classes that would meet that interest.
  - ❖ Family Service Workers will document the shared information in Family Tracking, and also date the Family Training Plan.
2. Head Start and Early Head Start settings are open to parents during all program hours. Parents are **welcomed** as visitors and encouraged to observe children as often as possible and to participate with children in group activities.
  - During Parent Orientation, at Home Visits, at Parent Committee meetings, and when they visit the center, parents will be asked to sign in as a volunteer.
  - All Tri-County HS/EHS staff will **welcome** parents, encouraging them to be involved with their child at the center, and work toward developing a positive working relationship with them.
3. The participation of parents in any program activity must be voluntary, and is not required as a condition of the child's enrollment.
  - No child will be denied participation in Tri-County HS or EHS program because of lack of involvement of the parent.
4. Every center will have a designated area for parent information. This will include items of interest, local activities, brochures, videos, and local news items. This should include:
  - A "Parent Corner" for parent information, which will include a bulletin board and brochure display where local activities, brochures and items of interest can be posted.
  - A lending library of videos and books from which parents can borrow. This should include topics such as: Positive Discipline, Nutrition for children and families, Parenting, Health Issues, and other topics of interest to parents with young children.

5. The program provides parents with opportunities to participate in the program as employee or volunteers (see 1304.52 (b)(3) for additional requirements about hiring parents.)
- Employees: Job openings will be posted for parents to read at each Head Start Center. Parents who are seeking employment will also be informed of job openings in writing, by phone call, or in person. Parents will be encouraged to apply for Head Start positions.
    - a. If a parent meets the qualifications for the position and has qualifications equal to other applicants being considered for the job, the parent will be given preference.
    - b. FSW's will inform parents of job training opportunities being offered in the community. They will be encouraged to attend if the training is appropriate for them.
    - c. Parents will be encouraged to volunteer in the program, however, it will not be a requirement for participation in the HS/EHS program. Parents will be given training at orientation of the opportunities for volunteering and volunteer guidelines.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (e) and 1304.21

**Subject: Parent Involvement in Child Development and Education**

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**Policy:**

Parental involvement enhances the ability of parents and staff to work together to support each child's growth and learning.

**Procedure:**

1. The program builds upon the principles of staff learning to assist, encourage, and support parents as they foster the growth and development of their children.
  - Teachers, Family Service Workers, and Home Visitors encourage parents to share observations and anecdotal notes on their child's habits, behaviors, and patterns of learning.
  - Teachers and Home Visitors solicit input from parents on developmental and educational goals for the child.
  - Staff requests that parents share activities from their culture.
  - At Parent-Teacher Conferences, Home Visits, Socializations, and Parent Committee meetings parents will be provided with information about developmentally appropriate skills for their child and be given suggested activities to support those skills.
  - Opportunities to serve on education committees are offered to parents/guardians, community members, and early childhood professionals.
  
2. Home Base Tri-County Early Head Start is built on the principles of adult learning, to encourage parents as they support the growth and development of their children.

Home Visitors encourage parents to be active partners in the learning process in home base programs.

- ❖ Home Visitors train parents to be the primary educator of their children.
- ❖ Home Visitors solicit input from parents to plan learning activities for each visit.
- ❖ Home Visitors and parents build upon past experiences and use current experiences as learning opportunities.
- ❖ Home Visitors and parents use the home as the setting for adult learning.
- ❖ Home Visitors use Galileo Assessment Results to train parents on child assessments, activities and strategies for learning.

**Principles of Adult Learning in Home Base Programs**

Home Visitors encourage parents to actively participate in problem solving.

In home base programs, Home Visitors offer parents and children opportunities for socialization activities.

Both center base and home base programs provide parents opportunities to enhance their parenting skills and their understanding of educational and developmental needs of their children.

Teachers and Home Visitors assist parents as adult learners to recognize and address their own literacy goals.

Teachers and Home Visitors plan literacy activities that involve parent and child

Teachers and Home Visitors provide information on how to use literacy activities in everyday life and how parents can promote literacy in the home, both in English and the home language.

Tri- County Head Start and Early Head Start Centers include a resource library, parent corner, and computer sites for parents and family members.

Teachers conduct no less than two (2) **parent-teacher conferences** during the program year.

**Parent-Teacher conferences** are used for in-depth discussions of each child's development and adjustment to the Head Start/Early Head Start Program.

Teachers ask parents to share their observations of their children during conferences and to discuss their expectations, or express concerns and ask questions.

Information gathered during **parent-teacher conferences** is used to identify ways to improve the child's learning in the home and in the HS/EHS environments.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (g)

**Subject: Parent Involvement in community advocacy.**

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**Policy:**

The program supports and encourages parent involvement in community advocacy.

**Procedure:**

1. The program support and encourages parents to influence the character and goals of community services in order to make them more responsive to their interests and needs. Family Service Workers encourage parents to become active in community organizations so they will have voice in the planning and development of programs.
  - Center Coordinators/FSW's may accompany parents to meetings or activities of community organizations in order to facilitate the parents' comfort level at the meeting.
2. The program establishes procedures to provide families with comprehensive information about community resources (see 1304.41 (a)(2) for additional requirements). Every family is provided with a Resource Guide listing services available in their community within 45 days of the child's enrollment into program.
  - At the first Home Visit, every family who is enrolled in Tri-County Head Start/Early Head Start is provided a Resource Guide. The FSW will review the information with the family to assure that the family is aware of resources and how to access them.
3. Parents are provided regular opportunities to work together, and with other community members, on activities that they have helped develop and in which they have expressed an interest.
  - Center Coordinators/FSW's are encouraged to be active participants in a minimum of one community agency that works with children and families.
  - Center Coordinators/FSW's invite and encourage parents to be active participants in community organizations and activities, especially those that affect them and their families in the hopes that their voice will be heard when the organization/agencies are making plans for the future.
  - Center Coordinators/FSW's invite representatives of community organizations and agencies to attend Parent Meetings and activities. This gives the parents an opportunity to get acquainted, ask questions, and feel that they might be able to participate in those activities.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (f) and 1304.24

**Subject: Parent Involvement in health, nutrition, and mental health education**

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**Policy:**

The program provides medical, dental, nutrition, and mental health education programs for program staff, parents, and families.

**Procedure:**

1. The program ensures that, at a minimum, the medical and dental health education program:
  - (i) Assists parents in understanding how to enroll and participate in a system of ongoing family health care.
    - ❖ Family Service Workers (FSW's) work with families to assure that children receive a physical and dental exam, and encourage families to develop regular health providers (medical homes).
  - (ii) Encourages parents to become active partners in their children's medical and dental health care process and accompany their child to medical and dental examinations and appointments; and
  - (iii) Provides parents with the opportunity to learn the principles of preventive 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 (e.g. maternal and child health and prevention of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)), information specific to the health needs of individual children must also be made available to ever extent possible.
    - General Safety and Health information that is of interest to all families is given to everyone at Family Activities, parent training, newsletters, and information sent home to parents.
    - FSW's provide information to specific families as they indicate their interest or need.
    - Emergency First Aid and CPR training is offered to center staff and parents annually.
    - Training and information on Fire Safety in the home, escaping a fire, and what to do in case of a Tornado, is given to children and parents or guardians annually.
  
2. The program ensures that the nutrition education program includes, at a minimum:
  - (i) Nutrition education in the selection and preparation of foods to meet family needs and in the management of food budgets; and
    - The Head Start Nutrition Coordinator provides nutrition education material to the families and provides nutrition training to staff and parents.
    - Head Start/Early Head Start also utilizes the Florida Extension Services and WIC program to provide nutrition training to parents.
  - (ii) Parent discussions with program staff about the nutritional status of their child.
    - Staff will discuss the child's nutrition with parents at parent-staff conferences and home visits.
    - Parents are encouraged to address any concerns about their child's nutrition to Head Start/Early Head Start staff.
  
3. The program ensures that the mental health education program provides, at a minimum:
  - (i) A variety of group opportunities for parents and program staff to identify and discuss issues related to child mental health:
    - At least one Parent Meeting or Parent Activity a year will be devoted to discussing child's mental health issues and discipline techniques.
    - Staff will inform parents of local informational meetings or classes that address mental health issues.

- (ii) Individual opportunities for parents to discuss mental health issues related to their child and family with program staff; and
  - Staff/Parent conferences will include mental health issues that the child may have including concerns that the parent has such as child discipline or emotional issues.
  - Parents are encouraged to speak with staff about their concerns regarding their child or families mental health issues.
  
- (iii) The active involvement of parents in planning and implementing any mental health interventions for their children.
  - No action will be taken in the Head Start or Early Head Start program involving mental health interventions for a child without written consent from the parent. Staff will initiate verbal communication to assure that the parent fully understands the plans for their child before they give their approval.
  - Staff will encourage parents or legal guardians to be actively involved in their child's education and in planning any mental health interventions.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships** P.S. 1304.40 (e) (5), 1304.21 (a)(2)(iii), 1304.40 (i)

**Subject: Parent Involvement in Home Visits – Conferences**

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**Policy:**

Staff will enhance their own and the family's understanding and knowledge of the educational and developmental progress of children in the program.

**Procedure:**

1. Teaching Staff will use the two home visits a year to share educational and developmental progress of child with the parents.
2. Staff will encourage the parents to ask questions and discuss any concerns or expectations they may have for their child.
3. Educational and assessment information should be shared with the parent during home visits and conferences.
4. Home visits and conferences provide staff and parent to discuss in detail child's development, adjustment to the program, and progress.
5. Parents are not required to permit home visits as a condition of child's participation in Head Start.
6. Every effort must be made to explain the advantages of home visits to the parents.
7. Staff will focus on family strength, interest, and goals.
8. Home visits will not be made if there is a safety issue.
9. Family Service Workers will make every attempt to visit with parents in their home at least once a year.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (i) and 1306.32 (b)(8) and 1306.33 (a)(1)

**Subject: Parent Involvement in home visits**

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**Policy:**

Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in home visits.

**Procedure:**

1. The program does not require that parents permit home visits as a condition of the child's participation in Head Start or Early Head Start Center –Based program options. Every effort is made to explain the advantages of home visits to the parents.
  - When enrolling a child into the program, the parents or legal guardian will complete a Family Partnership Agreement at which time they agree to participate in Home Visits. They have the option of not agreeing to that portion of the agreement.
  - If a parent requests no Home Visit, the Family Service Worker will make every effort to find a mutually agreeable place to make contact with the family.
  
2. The child's teacher in center-based programs makes no less than two home visits per program year to the home of each enrolled child, unless the parents expressly forbid such visits, in accordance with the requirements of 1306.32(b)(8).
  - The teacher will make two home visits each year in addition to two in-center conferences to discuss the child's development and education.
  - All (teacher & other staff) Home Visits will be documented on the Family Tracking Log by FSW.
  
3. The program schedules home visits at times that are mutually convenient for the parents or primary caregivers and staff.
  - FSW's schedule is flexible to allow for meeting with parents at a time that is convenient for them, and to encourage attendance at the meeting of both parents if it is a two-parent home. If the parents of the child are not living together, staff will schedule time to meet with both parents of the child when possible.
  
4. In cases where parents whose children are enrolled in the center-based program option ask that the home visits be conducted outside the home, or in cases where a visit to the home presents significant safety hazards for staff, the home visit may take place at the center or at another safe location that affords privacy.
  - **At no time should staff put themselves in jeopardy when attempting to make a Home Visit.**

**Home Visits or other conferences with families are an excellent opportunity to provide Family Literacy awareness to parents. This can be done by asking the parents what activities their child has done throughout the day or last evening, etc. Then point out to the parents how those activities are part of literacy i.e. reading shows children letters, left to right; while taking a walk or going to the park the child is observing nature, trees, flowers, rocks, changes in nature, etc., which is all literacy (naming items, colors, differences, etc.).**

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (h) and 1304.41 ©

**Subject: Parent Involvement in transition activities**

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**Policy:**

The program assists parents in becoming their children's advocate as they transition both into Head Start from Early Head Start, the home, or other child care setting, and from Head Start to elementary school, a preschool program, or a child care setting.

**Procedure:**

1. Staff works to prepare parents to become their child's advocate through transition periods by providing that, at a minimum, a staff-parent meeting is held toward the end of the child's participation in the program to enable parents understanding of child's progress while enrolled in Head Start and to finalize Family Partnership.
  - Parents will receive an Orientation into the Early Head Start and Head Start program before the first day of attendance. In addition, parents will receive a Home Visit from the Family Service Worker early in the child's year to answer questions the parents may have and give additional information. Late enrollees and their parents will be given an orientation on their first day of attendance.
  - The Parent/Teacher conference held toward end of year will address the child's progress and readiness to enter Kindergarten. Other conferences throughout the year will also address the child's progress.
  - Early Head Start parents will complete the **Individualized Transition Plan** for children entering center-based EHS program.
  
2. To promote the continued involvement of Head Start parents in the education and development of their children upon transition to school, the program:
  - (1) Provides education and training to parents to prepare them for exercising their rights and responsibilities concerning the education of their children in the school setting; and
  - (2) Assists parents in communication efforts with teachers and other school personnel so those parents can participate in decisions related to their children's education.
  - During the scheduled Home Visit, staff will discuss the transition into the center or school with the parents, what they might expect, and availability of Parent Organizations, names of key staff members, etc.
  - Staff will invite a Kindergarten Teacher to attend the April or May Parent Committee meeting to discuss expectations of Kindergarten and how to prepare your child for Kindergarten.
  
3. Transition activities will be documented on the **Transition Tracking Form** in the Family Folder.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (a) (5)

**Subject: Parent Meetings and Activities**

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**Policy:**

Parental involvement and educational activities are responsive to the direct needs of the parents and will be made available to each family.

**Procedure:**

1. Each Center will conduct a parent meeting and parent activity each month.
2. Notice of upcoming meeting/activity will be posted a week in advance.
3. Children will take home notice of meeting/activity three (3) days in advance.
4. Agenda for meetings will be prepared prior to meeting.
5. Each parent must sign in at meeting.
6. Minutes of each meeting will be taken and contain main point of items discussed as well as any topics that need to be reported to Policy Council. Use Parent Meeting form for this documentation.
7. Minutes of prior meeting must be reviewed and voted on at the next meeting.
8. Parents will be elected as President, Vice President, and Secretary and they will run the parent meeting with assistance from staff as needed.
9. A copy of Parent Meeting Report, sign in sheet, minutes, agenda, and any handouts need to be sent to the Education Specialist.
10. Education topics shared at the meeting will consist of topic for month and parents may also include other topics that are relative to the general interest of the group during meeting.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships** P.S. 1304.40 (d) (3)(e)(1)- 1404.52 (b)(3), 1304.40 (e) (2-3)

**Subject: Parent Participation (Volunteer & Employee) (Education Committee)**

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**Policy:**

Parents must have an opportunity to participate in the program as a volunteer or an employee.

**Procedure:**

1. Parents will be given an opportunity to be involved in classroom planning through participation on Education Advisory Committee, Health Advisory Committee, and Policy Council.
2. Parents will be placed in positions best suited for their interest, time, and ability.
3. A variety of volunteer opportunities will be offered to the parents.
4. Parents will be given an opportunity to make suggestions for the program.
5. Parents will be given priority consideration for employment positions for which they qualify.
6. Parents will be encouraged to actively participate in activities that will strengthen their parenting skills.
7. Parents will be given opportunities to share their concerns about their children with staff.
8. Staff will share parenting information with parents.
9. Parent's participation must always be voluntary.
10. Parents who volunteer on regular weekly schedule will obtain a fingerprint/background check by Tri-County Community Council.
11. **All volunteers** must read, agree, and sign confidentiality statement.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (d)(1),(d)(2)

**Subject: Parental Involvement in Educational Activities**

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**Policy:**

Parental involvement and educational activities that are responsive to the direct needs of the parents will be available.

**Procedure:**

1. Parent participation in the design of activities for the children will expand parental strengths and interests and parents will be encouraged to be involved.
2. Parents will be welcomed at the center at any time.
3. Various activities will be made available to allow the parents an opportunity to be involved with the children and other adults.
4. Parents will be given a family interest survey at enrollment to gather parental input for newsletter articles and training.
5. During home visits/conferences teaching staff will ask parents for their input as to what they would like to see their child accomplish during year.
6. Parents will be given information on how to become involved with the education advisory committee.
7. Parents will receive an end-of-year survey requesting information about their child's learning experience throughout the program year.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (i)(4)&(5)-1306.33(a)(1)-1306.34

**Subject: Parental Involvement in Home Visits Made Outside of the Home**

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**Policy:**

Staff should make every effort to conduct visits in the home as visits outside the home are appropriate only in exceptional cases.

**Procedure:**

1. Visits may be outside the home per parent's written request that must give reason for Visit outside of home.
2. Visits may be outside the home if home presents a significant safety hazard for the staff but this must be documented and only done with prior approval by supervisor.
3. Staff will attend pre-service training on safely conducting home visits.
4. Staff will use caution during home visits, and follow basic safety guidelines.
5. Staff may use two staff on home visit to provide support.
6. Staff is encouraged to look at family strengths and its coping skills.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (f) (1) – 1304(f)(1)-(4), 1304.21 (c)(1)(iii)

**Subject: Parental Participation in health, nutrition, and mental health education**

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**Policy:**

Parents are encouraged to be involved in health, nutrition, and mental health education. Staff will collaborate and coordinate necessary trainings or provide information to the parents on various topics.

**Procedure:**

1. Parents will be given a survey at enrollment regarding topics on which they are interested in receiving more information on.
2. Based on survey results, information will be provided to the parents through trainings, *parent meetings, and newsletter articles.*
3. All Parents will be offered the opportunity to receive education through guest speakers, workshops, and newsletter articles.
4. Parents will be offered education that will help establish healthy habits in the home.
5. Parents will be offered education on a variety of mental health topics.
6. Parents will be offered education on specific health related issues as it relates to the children or issues per parent's request on topic relating to the family.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (d)(3)

**Subject: Parents as Volunteers**

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**Policy:**

Parents will be provided opportunities to participate in the program as volunteers.

**Procedure:**

1. Parents who express an interest to volunteer will be encouraged to do so by staff.
2. Parents who volunteer must attend a training to help volunteers understand the Head Start/Early Head Start Program.
3. A designated staff member will train all volunteers.
4. Parents who volunteer must comply with Tri-County Head Start/Early Head Start screening.
5. A file will be kept in the office on each parent volunteer who volunteers more than 10 hours a month or whatever hours are required by state regulation.
6. Volunteers use sign-in/out sheet to keep track of hours.
7. All names and contact information of volunteer needs to be submitted to Family Service Coordinator.
8. Each volunteer must sign a Confidentiality Statement.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (b)(1)

**Subject: Providing Copies of Information to Parents/Guardians**

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**Policy:**

Parents or guardians will be provided information on community resources and program information and may request copies of information from child's family and/or education file.

**Procedure:**

1. Copies will be made of requested information and documented in file that information provided to parent.
2. Staff will present parent/guardian copy of requested information and place original back in file.
3. Documentation of removed information will include information copied, date copies submitted to parent and parent and staff's signature. This documentation will be on separate form.
4. A copy of signed document will be placed in family file.
5. If there is any question on the parental/guardian rights of the adult requesting information- proper identification and legal papers must be presented to Center Coordinator before any information is released.
6. If staff has any question on the legality of the requesting adult – staff will immediately contact the Family Service Coordinator.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships P.S. 1304.40**

**Subject: Referral Process 1304.40(g)**

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**Policy:**

Family Service Workers will identify/assess the need with parents/families prior to making a referral

**Procedure:**

- Involve the parent/family in need/problem identification and resolution. For example, when did it happen? How long has it been going on? What has the parent/family done about it? What resources has the parent/family used to resolve it before?
- Determine the parent's/family's resources to meet their own need.
- Learn the family's strengths, weaknesses, roadblocks, etc.

An adequate assessment:

- Guides staff members to help the family make decisions about which resources are appropriate.
- Increases success in advocating for the family.
- Facilitates helping the family obtain needed services.
- Increases the family's capacity to utilize the services.

Prior to making a referral, Family Service Workers and Home Visitors will discuss the case with the immediate supervisor. The Family Service Coordinator will be informed of all referrals. Family Service Workers and Home Visitors will keep copies of all referrals. A copy of the referral and all case notes relevant to the referral will be maintained in the record.

Center Coordinators and the Home Based Supervisor will schedule case staffing meetings when cases involve multiple disciplines.

All staff members will obtain the parent's written consent to obtain and release information as a part of the referral process.

When a referral is appropriate, Family Service workers and Home Visitors must prepare the family for the referral. Talk to the family about the agency's requirements, expectations and encourage family to utilize the resources.

Family Service Workers and Home Visitors will:

- Provide transportation for parents or accompany parents to agencies or organizations when appropriate
- Follow up with each referred family to ensure that services are received and meet the family's needs
- Advocate on behalf of the family as necessary.

**Child Plus**

Staff members will use the Child Plus system to record referrals made to community resources.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnership** P.S. 1304.40

**Subject: Release of Child** 1304.51 (g)

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**Policy:**

To assure children are released to authorized persons

**Procedure:**

1. Upon being accepted into Head Start/Early Head Start Program, but before the child begins attending, the Parent or Legal Guardian will complete the Department of Children & Family Child Care form.
2. On the Child Care form, the parent or legal guardian will list the persons who are authorized to pick up (or receive) the child. Two copies will be made of this form. The original will remain in the child's family file in the main office, the copy will be placed in the Emergency folder in the classroom. The center's which have transportation will make a third copy to be placed in the bus folder and kept in possession of bus escort. **Any person allowed to receive a child must be at least 16 years old.**
3. Staff will assure that only those persons listed as authorized to receive the child will receive the child at the end of the day. Any staff member releasing a child to an authorized person shall require photo identification from that person, unless the staff personally knows him or her.
4. When the class leaves the center at any time i.e. Field Trip, Fire or Fire Drill, a staff person will take the Emergency File.
5. If there is a non-custodial parent, Head Start/Early Head Start will follow Court Orders. The non-custodial parent will be allowed to see the child unless there is a Court Order saying that (s)he is not allowed to do so. If the Court has ordered that the non-custodial parent not be allowed to see the child, HS/EHS will need to have a copy of the Court Order on file.
6. If a non-custodial parent arrives to pick up a child, he or she will be allowed to do so **only if HS/EHS has a copy of the custody papers stating that the parent has visitation rights on that day.** However, if the visitation is not on the day the non-custodial parent wants to take the child, or there is no visitation allowed, HS/EHS will not allow him or her to take the child, unless the custodial parent has given permission in writing to center staff.
7. A non-custodial parent will be allowed access to the education, health, and nutrition progress of the child, but will not have access to the Family Section of the Child's Family File. **(see attached Custody/Visitation form).**
8. If a parent, guardian, or otherwise authorized person is incapacitated due to drugs or alcohol upon arrival at the center to pick up a child and the staff is concerned about the safety of the child, the staff will inform the parent of their suspicions of drug or alcohol use. They will then ask the parent if there is someone who is available to pick up the child. Staff will communicate to the parent that if nobody else is available to transport the child home then Head Start/Early Head Start will. If the parent insists they are going to drive the child home we must release the child but inform the parent that when they leave we

will call Law Enforcement and notify them of the situation. Incapacitated means: staggering or not able to walk or stand straight (not able to function), slurring of words, may be accompanied by a strong odor.

9. When the bus arrives to drop the child off, if the driver or escort observes that the parent, guardian, or person authorized to receive the child is incapacitated, staff will evaluate the safety of the child. If staff believes the situation is dangerous to the child, (s)he will leave the child, but will immediately call the Center Coordinator to report the situation. The Center Coordinator will report the situation to the Department of Children & Families. If no one else is available, the Center Coordinator will report to the local Law Enforcement.
10. The situation will be reported to the Family Service Coordinator on the Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting form.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (g) (1) (2)

**Subject: Resources & Referrals**

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**Policy:**

The active involvement of parents in advocacy and activities with other community members develops self-esteem, and builds skills while helping to organize and enhance community services and resources that best meet the needs of the families.

**Procedure:**

1. A list of community resources is distributed to the parents at the beginning of the program year.
2. Additional resource guides that are pertinent to serving the immediate family need will be distributed throughout the year as needed.
3. If Staff determines, through family partnership or other discussions, that assistance is needed, all resources known to staff will be discussed with family.
4. Staff will assist the family by making a referral for services after parent signs release of information on referral form.
5. Staff will contact the agency, accompany the family, and arrange for transportation as needed.
6. Staff is responsible for following-up with the parent and agency to ensure services are being provided as needed.
7. Written documentation of the referral and follow-up on referral will be on proper form and placed in child's family file.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section:       Family Partnership Building       1304.40**

**Subject:       School Readiness   Attendance**

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**POLICY:**

Children in the School Readiness Program must adhere to the attendance policy that applies to the program.

**PROCEDURES:**

1. School Readiness will be in attendance according to their specified hours of 6:30am - 8:00am before Head Start/ Early Head Start hours of 8:00 – 2:00 and afterward from 2:00pm - 5:30pm
2. Parents must complete a signature authorization form in order for Head Start/Early Head Start staff to sign their child in and out on the School Readiness Sign/Out Sheet.
3. Before Head Start/Early Head Start parents will sign their child in on the School Readiness Sign In/Out Sheet. Staff will sign the child out on the School Readiness form and on to the Early Head Start/Head Start Sign In/Out Sheet.
4. After Head Start/Early Head Start staff will sign the child out of Head Start/Early Head Start on to the School Readiness Sign In/Out Sheet.
5. When the child is picked up the parent will sign the child out on the School Readiness Sign In/Out Sheet.
6. Parents must submit a written excuse for children being absent for three days from the program.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40(c)(1)(ii) &(iii), (c)(2), (c) (3)

**Subject: Service to Pregnant Mothers**

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**Policy:**

Pregnant mothers will receive access to care and prenatal information through referrals and education.

**Procedures:**

1. Information on the risk of smoking and use of alcohol will be available at center for all pregnant mothers.
2. Information on the benefits of breast feeding will be available to the pregnant mother.
3. If pregnant mothers are not receiving WIC staff should give mother a referral.
4. Information on the benefits of breast feeding will be available to the family.
5. If family is not enrolled in Early Head Start, staff will periodically check with mother on health of herself and child. Pregnant mothers in Early Head Start will be given regular visits to assist in preparation of newborn.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (h) (1) – (4) 1304.41 (c)(1)

**Subject: Transition**

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**Policy:**

To assist parents/guardians in becoming their child's advocate as they transition into or out of Head Start/ Early Head Start.

**Procedure:**

*Prior to the Start of the School Year:*

1. Parents/Guardians will receive a copy of the Parent Handbook at Enrollment.
2. Family Orientation will be held prior to the first day of school.
3. Orientation will introduce family to staff and functions of Head Start/Early Head Start.
4. The children will have an opportunity to meet and interact with teaching staff at orientation.

*At End of the School Year*

5. Education and training will be provided to prepare parents to exercise their rights and responsibilities concerning their child's education.
6. Staff will assist in "opening the door" to communication between parents and public school personnel.
7. Children will be taken on tour of "big school" of parent's choice to allow them to become oriented with their school.
8. A teacher/parent meeting will be held toward the end of the child's participation in the Head Start/Early Head Start program to review child's progress and provide suggestions for summer learning activities for those children who not receive summer services.
9. Children who are four will be provided a transition packet with learning activities to use to prepare for Kindergarten.
10. Any material in family file needed by parent to enroll child into Kindergarten will be provided to the parent and copy of document will be placed in family file with note that original document being provided to the parent/guardian.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section:**      **Family Partnerships** P.S. 1304.40 (a) (2)

**Subject:**      **Transition for Newborns/Family Partnerships**

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**POLICY:**

Expectant Family and Home Visitor will establish and implement the family's partnership agreement upon enrollment into the Head Start/Early Head Start program. Transition of the newborn is to be established into the Head Start/Early Head Start home-based or center-based program option.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. At enrollment a family partnership will be established with the expectant family based off the expectant families needs to identify family needs and prepare for a smooth transition for the family when the baby is born.
2. Transition of newborn will begin to be established at first goal in the partnership and will be updated as needs of expectant family is met.
3. During this process, the type and frequency of support for the expectant family is established.
4. Children that are transitioning into a center-based option must first be cleared by the child's physician and the Head Start/Early Head Start program must follow state guidelines.
5. Children transitioning into a home-based option will have the flexibility to begin program services when deemed appropriate by the EHS program and family.

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Section: Family Partnerships**      P.S. 1304.40 (d)(3)

**Subject: Volunteer Supervision**

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**Policy:**

Parents must be provided an opportunity to participate in the program as a volunteer or employee.

**Procedure:**

1. The center staff will be responsible for supervision a volunteer.
2. The staff will be responsible for ensuring that volunteers sign in.
3. The center staff will encourage volunteerism in the center.
4. The center staff will supervise the volunteers in the classroom at all times.
5. The cook will supervise kitchen volunteers.
6. Volunteer hours must be documented and turned in monthly to Family Service Coordinator.
7. All volunteers will attend training before working in the center.
8. Center Coordinator will have various duties available for volunteer.
9. Center Staff must ensure that in-kind forms are properly filled out and signed.

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