

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

Section: Family Partnerships P.S. 1304.41 (a) (2) (v)(vi),1304.22(a)(2),(b)(2)

Subject: Child Custody Issues

Policy:

The following methods are to be used to handle situations and issues that arise regarding child custody conflicts.

Procedure:

If a written custody agreement exists between two parents.

1. The agreement must be on file in the child's family file housed in the office of the child's Head Start center.
2. Family Service Workers will inform Parents that we must legally follow the orders of the custody agreement.
3. The Family Service Worker and Home Visitor will inform all appropriate education staff and management staff of the custody agreement, and what it means. If questions arise regarding the content of the document, the Family Service Worker/Home Visitor will contact the Family Service Coordinator.
 - a. All staff will follow the Court order in regards to all aspects of program including sharing of information, pick-up and parent involvement.

NOTE: Without legal documentation on file, Head Start staff cannot legally prevent the non-custodial parent from removing the child from the Center, providing we are knowledgeable of who that parent is and the person shows proper identification.

Definitions:

Custody	Legal documentation which establishes with whom a child shall live.
Custodial Parent	Person with legal custody and with whom the child lives; may be parent, other relative, or someone else.
Non-Custodial Parent	Parent who does not have primary custody of a child but who has a responsibility for financial support.

Tri-County Community Council, Inc.
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Section: Community Partnerships P.S. 1304.41 (a)(2)

**Subject: Collaborative Partnerships/Relationships with Agencies-
Interagency Agreements**

Policy:

Partnerships will be formed with agencies that are responsive to the needs of Head Start/Early Head Start children and their families to secure access to a broad range of services.

Procedure:

1. Interagency agreements will be reviewed and updated on a yearly basis.
2. Staff will engage parents and agency representatives in discussions about the purpose and goals of the collaborative partnership.
3. Staff will strive to identify specific areas for working together to achieve shared goals for child and/or family.
4. Staff will nurture a respectful environment in which everyone's contributions are acknowledged.
5. Staff will notify Head Start/Early Head Start Director if problem arises obtaining a signature on an agreement.
6. Agencies that request information on interagency service agreement be edited must be referred to Head Start/Early Head Start Director.
7. After all signatures on interagency agreement are obtained, the service agreement remains valid for one year. Every effort will be made to meet all conditions listed in the agreement.
8. After signatures are obtained, the agreement will be submitted to the Head Start/Early Head Start Director.

Tri-County Community Council, Inc.
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Section: Community Partnerships P.S. 1304.41 (a)(1) – 1304.51 – 1304.41 (a)(2)

Subject: Community Partnerships

Policy:

Partnerships will be formed with community agencies to help improve delivery of services to Head Start/Early Head Start families.

Procedure:

1. A strong role will be taken in community planning to encourage strong communication, cooperation and sharing of information among agencies.
2. Staff will document all efforts used to establish community partners.
3. A network of formal and informal contacts will be maintained.
4. Staff will join interagency councils.
5. Involve families as active partners in community planning process.
6. Written agreements with community organizations will be signed to secure access to a broad range of services.
7. Staff will work with parents to identify agencies in the community that provide services for families with young children.
8. Data sources will be used to identify organizations that provide services responsive to a family's needs.
9. New partners will be developed through direct contact with agency or business, or invitation to Head Start/Early Head Start location.
10. Information on Head Start/Early Head Start should be available to new community partner at the initial meeting.
11. A follow-up letter should be sent to new partner after the initial meeting as a gesture of acknowledgement and thanks for their time.
12. Periodic contact should be made with the new community partner in an effort to promote on-going interest and support of Head Start and Early Head Start.

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Section: Community Partnership PS1304.41

Subject: Extended Care

POLICY: To provide quality childcare services to eligible families at a low cost to them.

PROCEDURE:

1. Extended care is childcare for working parents and parents attending school.
2. Extended care options
 - (a) Private Pay is to pay for additional hours before and after normal Head Start/Early Head Start hours (8:00-2:00) at the rate of \$2.40 per hour and portion of an hour.
 - (b) School Readiness Program is a state funded program which usually requires parents to have a fee.
3. Parents must be working or attending school to be eligible to participate in the Extended Care option.
4. Holmes and Washington Counties families will be referred to Early Learning Coalition of Northwest Florida for assistance. Walton County families will be referred to Child Care Services office in Defuniak Springs for assistance.
5. Center Coordinator or designated staff will forward weekly fee payment and monthly attendance records to Education Coordinator.
6. Notify the Education Coordinator of all children attending or dropped from the extended care.

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Section: Community Partnerships P.S. 1304.41 (a)(2)(iv)-1304.20(f)(2)-1308.4

Subject: Partnerships with Agencies that address Children with Disabilities

Policy:

Partnerships will be formed with parents and local education agencies to ensure that all children with a disability are provided a comprehensive, free, and appropriate education.

Procedure:

1. A written agreement will specify the services to be provided by service agencies and by Head Start/Early Head Start.
2. Every attempt will be made to serve children with disabilities.
3. Staff will work with the family to ensure that needed agencies are contacted on behalf of the child and the family.
4. Staff will notify the parent of all meetings held in regard to the child.
5. Staff will ensure that child is provided every opportunity to participate in daily activities at Head Start/Early Head Start.
6. Staff will ensure that all release of information forms are signed before information on child is shared with another agency.

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Section: Community Partnerships P.S. 1304.41 (a)(2)(v) & (vi)-1301.31(e)-1304.22

Subject: Partnerships with Child Abuse Prevention Programs

Policy:

Staff will follow regulatory guidelines relating to identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect.

Procedure:

1. Staff will contribute to community efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect by partnering with local child abuse prevention programs.
2. Staff will have child investigator sign designated form if visit made to center regarding a child.
3. Staff will provide needed information to child investigators.
4. Staff will provide support to child and family during child investigation.
5. Staff will report any mandated report to Family Service Coordinator or Director and complete the CAN (Child Abuse & Neglect) form for the file

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Section: Community Partnerships P.S. 1304.41 (a)(2)(i)(ii) & (iii)-1304.20(c)(5)

Subject: Partnerships with Health Care, Mental Health, and Nutritional Services

Policy:

Community Partnerships with professional services will secure access to a broad range of services.

Procedure:

1. Medical professionals are contacted to ensure professional opinion and guidance as Needed and invited to be involved with Health Advisory Committee.
2. Mental Health Professionals are contacted to provide contracted services to the children and families and provide needed resources.
3. Nutritional Professionals provide information on healthy lifestyles that families can incorporate into the home and are reflective of budget constraints.
4. Other Professional's (teachers, specialists, etc) will be contacted to assist in providing needed services to the families.

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Section: Community Partnerships P.S. 1304.41 (a)(2)(vii)-1304.41(c)

Subject: Partnerships with Local Elementary Schools, Libraries, and Museums

Policy:

Partnerships will be formed with public and school libraries, bookmobiles, and traveling art exhibits.

Procedure:

1. Staff will be aware of community events for the children that would focus on various forms of culture such as: storytelling activities, family concerts, museums.
- 2, Staff will make every attempt to invite a presentation at their center/classroom, or visit the cultural event as a field trip
3. Staff will invite community organizations and groups to co-sponsor cultural events at Head Start/Early Head Start facilities.
4. Staff will document children's participation at an event through documentation and pictures.
5. Staff will ensure that a thank you note is sent to community partner after visit to the event, or if event presented at the Center

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Section: Community Partnerships P.S. 1304.41 (a)(2)(ix)

**Subject: Partnerships with Other Organizations-
Serving on Community Committees**

Policy:

Staff is encouraged to become involved in the community provided that service on committees and boards does not interfere with job duties.

Procedure:

1. Personal service by staff on community committees and boards will not take precedence over time or duties of Head Start/Early Head Start.
2. If the service of staff on a committee or board becomes a conflict with job duties, the employee will be requested to remove themselves from the committee or board.
3. Staff representing Tri-County Head Start/Early Head Start on a committee or board will conduct themselves in a professional manner that will reflect the standards set forth by the agency.
4. Staff involved with a community agency will adhere to standards set forth by Head Star/Early Head Start regarding confidentiality.