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**COMPONENT: FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS**

**SUBJECT: PARENT INVOLVEMENT - GENERAL**

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:** In addition to involving parents in program policy-making and operations, Head Start must provide 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. Other community agencies should be encouraged to assist in the planning and implementation of such programs. Settings must be open to parents during all program hours. Parents must be welcomed as visitors and encouraged to observe children as often as possible and to participate with children in group activities. The participation of parents in any program activity must be voluntary, and must not be required as a condition of the child's enrollment. Head Start must provide parents with opportunities to participate in the program as employees or volunteers.

**POLICY AND PROCEDURE:**

The Family Service Manager (FSM) is responsible for establishing and ensuring that a family engagement program is implemented. All staff are required to assist and participate in various aspects of family engagement.

FSM collects information from parents through surveys, during parent committee meetings, individually through family needs assessments.

- Family Engagement surveys are completed at the Orientation.
- Parents' top interests related to themselves and to their child are prioritized.
- Parent meeting topics are established for that program year.
- Interests may surface during parent meetings, through family assessments and/or at committee meetings which is considered when planning family engagement and education services.

FSM and FAs are required to attend local community agencies meetings on a schedule determined each program year.

- Information received from parents should be shared to seek assistance from such agencies in preparing programs and/or addressing issues.

A variety of approaches are implemented to ensure parent interests and education needs are being addressed. The following group family engagement activities are to occur:

- Parent Committee Meetings are to be held on a monthly basis with the time/date established at the beginning of each program year.
- Annual program parent activity is planned and implemented by parents with assistance from staff. This activity is supported by the Parent Activity Fund.
- Family Engagement Activities
- Male Involvement Activities

All Staff will inform parents of center hours of operation at Orientation.

Family Service Manager and Family Services Workers are responsible to develop, coordinate and monitor plans and activities implemented by center staff that welcome parents to visit, encourage parents to observe children and to participate in group activities.

Family Service Manager is responsible to ensure that volunteer opportunities for parents are presented at parent committee meetings, included in the newsletter and posted on parent and classroom bulletin boards each month.

The Family Services Team will provide volunteer training to all parents/guardians during Orientation.

The Family Services Team will explain the benefits of family engagement and the positive impact that parental involvement has on a child's academic success.

See Community Partnerships Policies and Procedures for additional information about volunteer requirements.