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COMPONENT: FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

SUBJECT: ACCESSING COMMUNITY SERVICES AND RESOURCES

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: To work collaboratively with all participating parents/guardians to identify and continually access, either directly or through referrals, services and resources that are responsive to each family’s interests and goals. Such resources should include emergency or crisis assistance in areas such as food, housing, clothing, and transportation; education and other appropriate interventions, including opportunities for parents to participate in counseling programs or to receive information on mental health issues that place families at risk such as substance abuse, child abuse and neglect, and domestic violence; and opportunities for continuing education and employment training and other employment services through formal and informal networks in the community. Head Start staff must follow-up with each family to determine whether the kind, quality, and timeliness of the services received through referrals met the families’ expectations and circumstances.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE:

The Family Advocate will assist parents with the identification of strategies and techniques to obtain social services when confronted with barriers, such as lack of knowledge, resources, and communication skills.

The Family Service staff will identify emergency and crisis resources and make referrals when necessary.

The Family Advocate will provide each family with a resource manual upon entry into the program. The Family Advocate will e-mail information about new community resources to other Family Services Staff.

The Family Advocate will assist families in completing agency applications and initiate verbal and written referrals when necessary.

All staff will be informed and available to informally and confidentially discuss issues with families and make the appropriate referrals.

Parent training and activities will be offered to inform parents of community resources and education.

The Family Advocate will assist parents in identifying and securing access to continuing education training, and employment opportunities.

The Family Advocate will follow-up, at minimum, monthly with each family to determine what kind, quality and timeliness of services received met the family's expectation and/or circumstances. This follow-up will be entered as a case note into ChildPlus under Family Services events.

The Family Advocate will identify collaborative partnerships with counseling agencies or programs that target specific mental health issues.

The Family Advocate will provide mental health information to parents on prevention methods, support groups, identification of local mental health agencies which provide assistance with substance and child abuse and neglect.

The Family Advocate will complete the PFCE Outcomes survey twice annually to assess the progress of the family in the program in regards to PFCE guidelines.