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COMPONENT: EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: To be developmentally and linguistically appropriate recognizing that children have individual rates of development as well as individual interests, temperaments, languages, cultural backgrounds and learning styles; to be inclusive of children with disabilities; Provide an environment of acceptance that supports and respects gender, culture, language, and ethnicity; Provide a balanced daily program of child-initiated and adult-directed activities.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE: Classroom staff are responsible for ensuring that the classroom environment and planned activities are developmentally appropriate for all children including those with disabilities. The program will comply with Head Start Performance Standards by ensuring that:

- Teachers will utilize daily schedules which provide a balance of child-initiated and adult-initiated activities.
- Teachers, or other appropriate staff members, will complete a developmental screening for each child within the first 45 days of entry. Teachers will use the results of this screening to help determine the initial developmental level of each child.
- Teachers will complete ongoing observations to monitor each child’s ongoing progress. The Class Grouping by LAP-3 Item report will be utilized.
- The Class Grouping by LAP-3 Item report will be utilized and maintained during Begin, Mid, and End checkpoints and submitted to the Area Coordinator, per program calendar.
- Teachers will plan individualized activities for children by utilizing current child assessment data.
- Teachers will work with each child individually on a regular basis. Specific individualized activities should be documented daily.
- Teachers will plan small group activities using the most current assessment data and will ensure that small group activities occur each day. This information will be documented on the weekly School Readiness Lesson Plan Form.
- Teachers will supply a variety of materials and planned activities designed to encourage individual and group play.
- Teachers will provide continuous opportunities for all children to experience success.
- Teachers must change materials intentionally and periodically to support children’s interest, development and learning. Changes will be noted under the notes section on the Required Topics section of the Lesson Plan.

- In order to show respect for children's culture, teachers will provide an environment that reflects the culture of all children in the program as well as a variety of materials found in the home.
- Staff will incorporate the use of children's home language by providing books and materials in the child's home language.
- Classroom staff will learn key phrases in the child's home language.
- Staff will model respect and refrain from planning activities that stereotype or limit children based on their gender, age, disability, race, ethnicity, or family composition.
- Teachers will plan for variation in ability levels and interest. Teachers will use information from recent assessments in conjunction with the School Readiness Plan, when determining the developmental level of each child. Efforts will be documented on the Class Grouping by LAP-3 Item report.
- Teachers will observe children as they engage in play for opportunities to extend their thinking and range of interest and to assist them in developing problem solving skills.
- A program must implement an intentional, age appropriate approach to accommodate children's need to nap or rest, and that, for preschool age children in a program that operates for six hours or longer per day provides a regular time every day at which preschool age children are encouraged but not forced to rest or nap. A program must provide alternative quiet learning activities for children who do not need to want to rest or nap.
- For children with disabilities, teachers will use routines, activities, and experiences that work toward achieving the goals set in the child's IEP.
- Individual children will be allowed to use the rest room when needed.
- Toilet training will be encouraged when developmentally appropriate and supported by the parents.