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**COMPONENT: COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

**SUBJECT: ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:** To ensure Head Start takes an active role in community planning to encourage strong communication, cooperation, and the sharing of information among agencies and their community partners and to improve the delivery of community services to children and families in accordance with the agency’s confidentiality policies. Documentation must be maintained to reflect the level of effort undertaken to establish community partnerships. Head Start must take affirmative steps to establish ongoing collaborative relationships with community organizations to promote the access of children and families to community services that are responsive to their needs. Such community needs must include health care providers such as clinics, physicians, dentists, and other health professionals; mental health providers; nutrition service providers; individuals and agencies that provide services to children with disabilities and their families; family preservation and support services; child protective services; local elementary schools and other educational and cultural institutions, such as libraries and museums, for both children and families; providers of child care services; and any other agency that may provide support and resources to families.

**POLICY AND PROCEDURE:**

The Family Service **staff or designee** are responsible for designing an effective community involvement plan, which includes:

- Participating in community meetings and events monthly
- Establishing and maintaining interagency agreements with community service providers that can support the needs of Head Start families including but not limited to:
  - Health and dental care providers;
  - Mental health organizations;
  - Nutritional service providers;
  - Individuals and agencies that provide services to children with disabilities and their families.
  - Family preservation and support services
  - Child protective services
  - Libraries
  - Local community resource centers
  - Crisis intervention programs
  - Child care providers, **local elementary schools, and other cultural institutions**
  - Any organization or business that may provide support and resources to families

- Educating community stakeholders about Head Start and the needs of Head Start families
- Maintaining a volunteer outreach program designed to encourage volunteers from the community
- Community Partners will be included in the Recruitment Plan and Resource Book
- Child Plus **and all enrolled families** will receive a copy of the Resource Book