



Mobile!

2013-2014

Center Compliance Standards Manual

Early Head Start Mobile!

Gulf Regional Early Childhood Services

Table of Contents

Welcome to Early Head Start.....	5
Early Head Start Centers.....	5
Introduction.....	6
What is Early Head Start?.....	7
Education and Early Childhood Development 1304.21	7
ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE /Screening 1304.20(a-b)	8
Assessment: Teaching Strategies GOLD.....	8
Process: Placement.....	10
Child Observations: Teaching Strategies GOLD 1304.20(d); 1304.21	10
Curriculum Planning 1304.21	11
Planning Process	12
School Readiness: Reporting Child Outcomes	12
Procedure	12
Daily Schedule 1304.21.....	13
Infant Schedule	13
Toddler Schedule	13
Transitions 1304.21; 1308.21	13
Classroom Observations 1304.21	14
The Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised Edition (ITERS) 1304.21	15
The Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) 1304.21	15
Parent Communication: Classroom 1304.51	16
Parent Resource Center 1304.21	16
Parent Volunteers 1306.22	16
Home Visits 1304.40(e)(4) & 1304.40(i)(2).....	17
Parent Conferences 1304.21.....	18
Family Partnership Agreements 1304.40(a)(1)(2)	18

Official Documents Posted in Classrooms and Centers	18
License and Inspections:.....	19
Emergency Procedures-Posted close to classroom door:.....	19
Parent Information: Post on" Parent Bulletin Board" easily accessible to parents	19
Teacher Resources.....	19
Program Hours of Operation 1306.32	19
Arrival 1304.22	19
Departure 1304.22.....	20
Parent Sign-In/Sign-out Procedure 1304.22	21
Releasing Children 1304.22	21
Attendance for Children 1305.8.....	22
Extra Clothing for Children	22
Parent Engagement 1304.40	23
Policy Council 1304.50.....	23
Parent Committees 1304.50.....	24
Documentation Of Parent Contacts 1304.21	24
Daily Health Check 1304.22; 1304.20(d)	24
Immunization Records 1304.20(a).....	25
Physical Examinations 1304.20(a).....	25
Dental Screenings and Examinations 1304.20(a).....	26
Oral Health 1304.20 (a).....	26
Hand Washing 1304.20(d);1304.22(a-f)	26
Short-Term Exclusion 1304.22(b).....	27
Classroom Sanitation/Cleaning/Safety 1304.53(a) & 13-4.22(e).....	29
Classroom Safety 1304.53.....	29
Playground Safety 1304.53	29
Medication Administration 1304.22(c).....	30
First Aid Kit 1304.22(f)	30
Accidents or Incidents 1304.27.....	30

Nutrition: Food Service/Menus 1304.23 (c)(1)-(6)	31
Nutrition: Special Diets and Food Allergies 1304.23	32
Disabilities 1308	33
Referral Process	33
Individualization	33
Transition/IEP/IFSP Meetings	34
Mental Health 1304.24	34
Classroom Observation by Mental Health Consultant 1304.20	35
Outside Playtime 1304.53(a)(1)	36
Receiving New Children and Families	36
Supervision of Children 1304.53	36
Rest Time 1304.22 (e)(7)	37
Socialization 1304.21	37
Confidentiality 1304.52(ii)	37
Standards of Conduct Policy 1304.52(h)(i)	38
Child Abuse and Neglect 1304.22(5)	38
Materials/Supplies 1304.53(a)(b)	39
Cell Phones	40
Fees 1305.9	40
In-Kind Contribution 1304.51(h)(1)	40
Staff Attendance/Leave	40
Staff Evaluations 1304.52	41
Training and Technical Assistance 1304.52(k)	41
Resignation	41
Chain of Command	41
<i>The Early Head Start Teacher</i>	42

Welcome to Early Head Start

Please read and review the information in this handbook thoroughly. Keep this handbook accessible and refer to it when you have questions regarding job policies and procedures. As additional information is available, it will be given to you to add to the handbook.

Your Center Director and Service Area Coordinators are available to assist you in providing our children and families with the best foundational experience possible.

Early Head Start Centers

Dearborn YMCA Center Tot Time

Center Director: **Vandorious Bridgett**
321 N Warren Street
Mobile, Al 36603 (251) 438-2273

Nina Joseph Child Development Center

Center Director: **Thelma Johnson**
209 Washington Avenue
Mobile, Al 366202 (251) 441-0840

Lighthouse Academy of Excellence

Early Head Start Supervisor: **Bradley Harris, Melody Patterson**
9930 Cody Driskell Road
Grand Bay, Al 36541 (251) 957-0641

Goodwill Easter Seals Child Development Center

Center Director: **Christy Jones**
2448 Gordon Smith Drive
Mobile, Al. 36617

Early Head Start Mobile! does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or age in admission, treatment, or participation in its programs, services and activities, or in employment. For further information about this policy, contact: ***Kym Carroll, Early Head Start Director, 251-473-1060 ext. 116.***

Introduction

The care that infant, toddlers, and twos receive and their experiences during the first 3 years of life have a powerful influence on the way they view the world, relate to others, and succeed as learners. As a teacher, you have a unique opportunity to make a difference in the lives of very young children and their families.

Birth to age 3 is the most important period of development and a period in which children are very vulnerable. Initially, they are totally dependent on adults to meet their every need. When their care and experiences are nurturing, consistent, and loving, children flourish. Almost every day you can see exciting changes as children learn to trust you, explore the environment you have created, make discoveries, and begin to see themselves as competent learners. Infants, toddlers, and twos who receive high-quality care are more likely to become sociable, capable preschoolers who get along with others, develop self-control, and love learning. Your influence on children and families depends on the quality of the interactions you provide. Teachers must be intentional about what they do each day in their work with children.

Building partnerships with families is one of the most important components in the curriculum. Early Head Start views families as important partners in children's learning. Teachers who foster trusting partnerships with their children's families are often rewarded with a deeper insight into individual children's learning styles and developmental progress. Children often gain confidence in their abilities when they know that a team of caring adults shares in their triumphs and works together to achieve a positive learning experience.

What is Early Head Start?

Early Head Start (EHS) is a federally funded community-based program for low-income families with infants and toddlers and pregnant women. Its mission is simple:

- *to promote healthy prenatal outcomes for pregnant women,*
- *to enhance the development of very young children, and*
- *promote healthy family functioning.*

In 1994 Head Start Reauthorization Act established a New Program. Early Head Start evolved out of Head Start's long history of providing services to infants and toddlers through Parent Child Centers, Comprehensive Child Development Centers and Migrant Head Start programs. Recent advances in the field of infant development made this an especially exciting time to have Head Start formally expand its family to include the provision of Early Head Start services.

Education and Early Childhood Development 1304.21

Curriculum means a written plan that includes:

- 1) the goals for children's development and learning;
- 2) the experiences through which they will achieve these goals;
- 3) what staff and parents do to help children achieve these goals; and
- 4) the materials needed to support the implementation of the curriculum.

The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos is used as a framework for an integrated approach that includes social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development. The curriculum is consistent with the Head Start Program Performance Standards and is based on sound child development principles about how children grow and learn. This curriculum includes objectives for children's development and learning. Objectives define where you want to go, and the curriculum tells you how to get there. Curriculum is the what, why, how, and when of providing quality services. You will find that the Creative Curriculum will help you as a teacher to be intentional about the experiences you offer infants, toddlers, and twos while still having the flexibility to respond to the changing interests and abilities of the young children in your care.

ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE /Screening 1304.20(a-b)

Screenings are conducted within 45 days of the child's entry into the program for development, sensory, and behavioral concerns. Early Head Start Mobile uses *Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3)* and *Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social and Emotional (ASQ-SE)* as its developmental screening tools to assess children's development and to identify any existing or potential delays in development. All children entering Early Head Start classrooms receive developmental screening within 45 days of enrollment.

- ✓ Developmental screening is a brief check to identify children who need further evaluation to determine whether they may have a developmental delay. It provides information in five major areas: gross motor, language, cognition, fine motor, and self Help.
- ✓ Sensory screening includes checking visual and hearing to determine if a child may need a referral to a health care provider for follow-up and/or referral to a specialist.
- ✓ Behavioral screening identifies concerns in social and emotional development.

Center Directors/Supervisors monitor to ensure that screenings are conducted within 45 days of the child's entry, that results are scored, documented, and data entered into ChildPlus. Center Directors will monitor to ensure that any and all action required as a result of the screening, re-screens and referrals, takes place in a timely manner and follow-up plans and actions occur and are documented. Center Directors/Supervisors use reports from ChildPlus to monitor and follow-up with progress. Health/Disabilities Coordinator will monitor ChildPlus on a monthly basis to address progress and concerns and to ensure all staff members are working with the parent to meet the screening and follow-up requirements.

Assessment: Teaching Strategies GOLD

Early Head Start Mobile uses the Teaching Strategies GOLD online assessment system to record documentation, create weekly activity plans, assess children's developmental progress and communicate that progress with family members.

Teaching Strategies GOLD is an authentic, observational assessment system for children birth through kindergarten. It is inclusive of children with disabilities, dual language learners, and children who demonstrate competencies beyond typical developmental expectations.

Assessment is the process of gathering information. Head Start Performance Standards require ongoing assessment of each child to identify the unique strengths and needs of each child in

order to plan and individualize. Assessment of individual children's development and learning is essential for planning and implementing appropriate curriculum.

The Teaching Strategies GOLD Checkpoints is a developmental checklist completed based on observations, work samples and knowledge you have about the child's skills and abilities. Each objective on the checklist is rated on a continuum of development.

The primary purposes of GOLD are to help teachers:

- Observe and document children's development and learning over time
- Support, guide, and inform planning and instruction
- Identify children who might benefit from special help, screening or further evaluation
- Report and communicate with family member and others

The secondary purposes are to help programs:

- Collect and gather child outcome information as one part of a larger accountability system
- Provide reports to administrators to guide program planning and professional development opportunities.

GOLD is a system that allows teachers to:

- record observations
- include work samples (using photos or video)
- assess children using a developmental checklist
- summarize assessment information by pulling information directly from the developmental checklist
- identify learning goals either from scratch or from a list of suggested goals from the developmental checklist
- write weekly curriculum plans
- access hundreds of activity ideas within the site.

Assessment is completed formally with the Checkpoints tool within GOLD.

- Progressions of development and learning include indicators and examples tied to chronological ages.
- The progressions are based on standard developmental and learning expectations.
- The rating scale is used to assign a value to the child's level on a particular progression.
- The "in-between" boxes allow for more steps in the progression.

- Can indicate that children’s skills are emerging in this area but not yet solid.
- Enables you to indicate that a child needs adults support (verbal, physical or visual) to accomplish an indicator.
- Is organized using colored bands for each year of life and kindergarten.
- Recognizes that development and learning are uneven, overlapping and interrelated.
- Provides strategies for each objective which offers ways to promote development and learning in relation to the objective.
- Children are placed in the GOLD color band based on their age as of the first day of the program.
- For infants, ones and twos, the child’s color band will move up automatically on the child’s birthdate.
- When a child turns three during the program year, the child will be assigned to the 3 year old (green) color band and remain on the color band for the remainder of the program year.

Process: Placement

1. Children are placed in the GOLD color band based on their age as of the first day they enter the program.
2. For infants, ones and twos, the child’s color band will move up automatically on the child’s birthdate.
3. When a child turns three during the program year, the child will be assigned to the 3 year old (green) color band and remain on the color band for the remainder of the program year.

Child Observations: Teaching Strategies GOLD 1304.20(d); 1304.21

1. Classroom teachers are required to formally observe each child each week
2. Documentation of child observations is to be entered into TS GOLD.
3. Teachers will collect observations that relate to the 38 objectives in Teaching Strategies GOLD. These are aligned to the Early Head Start Mobile! school readiness objectives.
4. Classroom staff will write a short narrative describing an event, skill or behavior reflected in TS GOLD objectives/dimensions.
5. Guidelines for recording accurate information:
 - Record only what you see and hear.
 - Avoid making subjective remarks or using judgmental words.
 - Be objective.

- Avoid using phrases such as he seems, he is trying, he feels, he wants, I think, It looks like, she meant, I believe, I feel, he can't
 - Include the child's actual words, putting quotation marks around them so that they can be readily identified as the child's words.
 - Be positive.
 - Be specific.
 - Details give valuable information about what a child is demonstrating.
6. The observation will include:
 - Child's name
 - Date
 - Setting
 - Description of the activity
 7. Enter observations within 24 hours.
 8. The Education Coordinator will review and monitor observations to ensure that the on-going assessment process is used to form an individualized curriculum.

Curriculum Planning 1304.21

Teaching Strategies GOLD will be used for developing individual curriculum plans for each child. Planning is used as a documentation of individualized and planned activities that will meet each child's developmental needs and progress.

Teachers should have plans for children's experiences and activities daily. These plans should include a wide variety of activities and experiences that support growth and development in all developmental areas: Gross/Fine Motor, Language, Cognitive, and Social/Emotional. Materials should be age-appropriate and varied. Teachers should change/add materials regularly to the classroom (at least once per month) to generate and sustain children's interest and to promote developing skills. Teachers use outdoor activities as an extension of the classroom to include all domains. The outdoor experiences should reflect in all aspects of the curriculum.

Activity planning should be based on what teachers know about each child's stage of development, emerging skills and interests. Activity planning will provide a balanced environment of child initiated and adult directed activities including individual and small group experiences, routines and transitions to support optimal development. The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos, PITC, and other resources provided will be used as resources for planning. Additionally, experiences/activity planning should result from information gained through screening and ongoing assessment.

Planning Process

- Teachers will use observations and data they have gathered on each child in all objectives included in **TS GOLD**.
- Teachers will use the **Individual Child Planning Form** which is part of **Teaching Strategies GOLD** online.
- The **Individual Child Planning Form** will include each child's strengths, interests, and needs.
- The teacher will complete the plan online and email the plan to their center director.
- The center director is responsible for checking plans weekly.
- The plan will be printed and posted in the classroom.
- Infant teachers will complete the **Individual Child Planning Form** biweekly.
- Teachers of children aged 12 months and up will complete **Individual Child Planning Form** each week.

School Readiness: Reporting Child Outcomes

Child assessment data will be used at the classroom, center and program level, to plan and implement program improvements, plan for professional development needs and determine school readiness progress.

Procedure

- Teachers will collect and record data in domain areas, utilizing TS GOLD assessment and portfolio work samples.
- The child outcome data will be used by the Educational Coordinator, along with the teacher and center director to determine training and technical assistance needs and as a basis for professional development plans.
- Teachers will utilize outcome data to plan and create individual child plans and small group activities (as appropriate) which will support school readiness goals.
- Teachers will share individual child reports with parents during parent teacher conferences.
- **Checkpoints** for tracking child progress will be finalized as follows:
 - **October 4, 2013**
 - **January 16, 2014**
 - **May 16, 2014**

- Data from Early Head Start Mobile! will be used at the state level to track children's progress over time.

Daily Schedule 1304.21

The daily schedule provides a predictable routine that is responsive to children's needs. Schedules and routines provide a balanced environment of child initiated and teacher directed experiences, including individual and small group experiences, routines and transitions when appropriate. The schedule must occur in a timely, predictable and unrushed fashion according to the child's needs. Schedules are developed for each classroom by the Education Coordinator with input from teaching staff and the Center Director. Any changes to the daily schedule must be approved by the Center Director and the Education Coordinator.

Infant Schedule

Teachers in infant and toddler classrooms follow a self-demand schedule instead of a predetermined schedule or a by-the-clock sequence of events. This is a rhythmic response that involves communicating with parents to assess what the infant's current needs might be, then observing the infant's reactions and responding appropriately to their unique individual responses. Teachers should be relaxed and responsive and plan their day around routine care and interactions.

Toddler Schedule

The daily schedule provides for alternating periods of quiet and active experiences. Teachers will provide a balance of large and small muscle experiences. Planned or routine experiences are facilitated according to the needs and interest of children. Children should not be required to move from one activity to another as a group. Transitions are used as a vehicle of individualized learning and exploration. Routine task is incorporated into the classroom to stimulate children's learning. Routines such as toileting, eating, dressing, hand washing, tooth brushing should be practiced and individualized based on developmental needs.

Transitions 1304.21; 1308.21

Early Head Start staff will facilitate the transition process from Early Head Start into Head Start and other quality child development programs and support services. This will include transitioning into the program at initial enrollment, transitioning from one class to another if necessary within the program, and transitioning out of the program at completion.

When a child reaches the age of 29 months, the formal transition process will begin. The Family Services staff will meet with parents to discuss transition procedures as well as availability of Head Start and other child development services in the community. A written transition plan will be completed in partnership with parents, teachers, and Service area Coordinators. This plan will reflect an understanding of the child's unique characteristics, strengths, and challenges. Early Head Start staff will provide training, brochures, and/or information to parents on the transition process and the importance of their advocacy role and responsibilities. Teaching staff will offer ongoing support and provide opportunities to discuss transition strategies during home visits and parent/teacher conferences.

Classroom Observations 1304.21

Center Directors/Supervisors are required to conduct one classroom observation for every classroom each month. Center Directors will also observe informally to monitor and gather additional information and to follow-up on progress. Center Directors will utilize the Classroom Observation Form to document the classroom observations. The Observation Form is a tool that assesses how well the curriculum is being implemented and for monitoring quality and developmentally appropriate practices. After completing an observation, the center Director meets with the teaching team to discuss items that have been observed during the observation. The conference with the teaching staff is documented to summarize findings including strategies that are effective, and recommendations for the next step. Center Directors will follow up with observations on items identified as areas of concern and record the conference follow-up on the observation form.

Center Directors coordinated with the Health and Disabilities Coordinator are required to schedule classroom observations with the mental health consultant, who will provide supportive feedback to classroom teachers in promoting positive social and emotional wellness. The number and duration of observations by the mental health consultant will be individualized to best meet the needs of the classroom. Mental Health consultant will document the specific guidance and strategies recommended. Notes will be documented on the Mental Health Consultant's observation form.

Early Head Start Service Area Coordinators will conduct observations in each center on a quarterly basis. Other observations will be formal or informal based on the individual strengths and needs of each center or classroom and/or requested by the center Director/Supervisor. The Content area coordinator will meet with the Center Director/Supervisor and document all information on Observation Form.

Center Directors/Supervisors are required to conduct one classroom observation for every classroom each month. Center Directors will also observe informally to monitor and gather additional information and to follow-up on progress. Center Directors will utilize the Classroom Observation Form to document the classroom observations. The Observation Form is a tool that assesses how well the curriculum is being implemented and for monitoring quality and developmentally appropriate practices. After completing an observation, the center Director meets with the teaching team to discuss items that have been observed during the observation. The conference with the teaching staff is documented to summarize findings including strategies that are effective, and recommendations for the next step. Center Directors will follow up with observations on items identified as areas of concern and record the conference follow-up on the observation form.

The Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised Edition (ITERS) 1304.21

The ITERS is administered (3) three times each program year by the ITERS observer. The observation tool is used as a classroom assessment tool designed to measure the quality of our Early Head Start classrooms by collecting data through classroom observations and staff interviews. The assessment is a 39-item rating scale organized into seven environmental subscales:

- Space and Furnishings
- Personal Care Routines
- Listening and Talking
- Activities
- Interaction
- Program Structure
- Parents and Staff

A ranking of (1) describes care that does not meet childcare expectations while a ranking of (7) describes high quality care. The items in the first six subscales are referred to as child-related, and the items in the last subscale are referred to as parent/staff-related.

The Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) 1304.21

The ECERS define environment in a broad sense and guide the observer to assess the arrangement of space both indoors and outdoors, the materials and activities offered to the children, the supervision and interactions (including language) that occur in the classroom, and the schedule of the day, including routines and activities. The support offered to parents and

staff is also included. The ECERS are designed to assess group programs for preschool-kindergarten aged children, from 2 ½ through 5 years of age. Total scale consists of 43 items organized into 7 subscales.

The ITERS/ECERS is also used for self-assessment to determine areas of high quality and areas that may need improvement. This observation tool enhances Teacher Professional Development and program Improvement Planning.

Each classroom will receive an Infant-Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS) or The Early Childhood Rating Scale (ECERS) three times a year. The Education staff and other designated individuals will complete the observation and assessment process. The observer will examine the quality of what children actually experience. Afterwards, the scores and explanation is shared with the classroom teaching team and a time is set to develop a plan based on analysis of the observation. Documentation will be recorded for future planning and follow-up. Results will be used for professional development planning and as a basis for technical assistance and classroom support.

Parent Communication: Classroom 1304.51

- A Parent/ Family area is designated in each classroom to offer School Readiness activities to assist parents with literacy-based resources to use in the home.
- Teachers can also use bulletin board space to display parent information. The bulletin board is to be clearly labeled indicating “Parent *Information*” is posted.
- Age-appropriate, activity plans are to be posted and available to parents, Center Directors, Early Head Start staff and licensing personnel.
- Daily news is provided to parents.

Parent Resource Center 1304.21

Each center will have an area “**School Readiness: Parent Resource Center**”. The parent literacy area is in each center to offer developmentally appropriate activities and to assist parents with school readiness resources to use in the home. The Parent Center is an area designated to better serve parents, family and community.

Parent Volunteers 1306.22

Volunteering in classroom provides parents with insight as to ‘how’ children develop, and ‘how’ to assist their child in their development. Volunteering in the classroom will provide parents an opportunity to gain self-confidence, learn to work with adults and children, get actual work

experience, and give the opportunity for the parent to share with the class important family and cultural insights from their own experiences. Parent volunteering in the classroom is encouraged by all Early Head Start teachers. It is also a source for reaching In-Kind goals.

Home Visits 1304.40(e)(4) & 1304.40(i)(2)

- The Center Director/Supervisor will coordinate home visits with teachers. Feedback is documented in ChildPlus. A minimum of two home visits will be conducted during each program year. Additional visits will be scheduled as necessary to provide quality services to families and promote growth for the families.
- Teachers will document all home visits using the home visit forms and will file documentation in the child's folder.
- Head Start Performance Standards require two home visits per program year for each child enrolled in the program. These are scheduled in September/October and again in the March/April.
- The Family Engagement Coordinator and Health /Disabilities Coordinator will attend home visits periodically and as needed.
- The first Home Visit should always be a positive experience for all involved. The teacher will share information about the curriculum, developmental screening, and assessment tools for individualized activity planning, etc.
- Family partnership goals, including school readiness goals and attendance goals should be reviewed during the home visit. Should resources beyond the scope of the center level be needed, the teacher will follow up with the Family Engagement staff to alert them to the need for additional family support.
- During each home visit the teacher will share and model school readiness activities and materials which focus on the developmental needs of the child.
- Teachers will use this time to support parents as teachers. They will also work with parents to identify parent developmental/school readiness goals as part of their child's individualized plan.
- There can also be discussion on locating and utilizing community services to support the Family Partnership Agreement. At the conclusion of the visit, Home Visit form is completed and signed by the parent and the teacher.
- The second home visit is a time to report on the child's progress in Early Head Start and discuss plans for the next level of development.
- Teachers are required to document home visits in ChildPlus within a week of the event.

Parent Conferences 1304.21

- Parent conferences are a requirement of the Performance Standards and at least two are required annually.
- The first Transition Parent Conference is in September and the second parent conference is in June. The conferences are held in the classrooms. Other parent conferences may be scheduled if needs arise.
- Teachers are required to document parent visits in ChildPlus within one week of the event.

Family Partnership Agreements 1304.40(a)(1)(2)

- Early Head Start is required to engage in a process of collaborative partnership building with parents to establish mutual trust and to identify goals, family strengths and necessary services.
- Staff will work with parents to implement the partnership agreement process. The agreement addresses their strengths, supports, needs and resources. It includes goals identified by parents with the focus on achieving greater self-sufficiency and on improving the family's life.
- Family Partnership Agreements will be developed with the parents by the Family Engagement staff and the teacher. Both short and long-term goals will be identified.
- Family partnerships will include at least one school readiness goal each enrolled child.
- Family partnerships will include an attendance goal of 85%.
- Referrals will be made to community agencies as necessary to assist in achieving the family goals.
- Teachers will submit the Child-Family Concern/Referral Form to the Family Services Coordinator when need is identified.
- Teachers will document progress toward family partnership goals monthly in ChildPlus.
- Center Directors will contact the Family Engagement Coordinator via telephone when urgent emergency assistance is needed. The Child-Family Concern/Referral will be completed and submitted within 24 hours. Documentation in ChildPlus is also required.

Official Documents Posted in Classrooms and Centers

Formal documents must be posted in an area in the classroom where they can be easily seen when someone enters the classroom. These documents will be routinely monitored by the Center Directors, Education Coordinator and other program Coordinators to ensure compliance.

License and Inspections:

- a. DHR License and evaluation(including corrective deficiencies report)
- b. Health Department report
- c. Inspection and food permit
- d. Fire Department report
- e. Fire Drill Reports

Emergency Procedures-Posted close to classroom door:

- a. Fire exit plans
- b. Tornado and fire procedures
- c. Emergency poster (includes phone numbers)
- d. First Aid Information (Placed with First Aid kit)

Parent Information: Post on" Parent Bulletin Board" easily accessible to parents

- a. Welcome sign/Teachers name on classroom door
- b. Class schedule
- c. Weekly menu/ nutrition information

Teacher Resources

- a. Activity Plans
- b. Daily Schedule
- c. Children with Allergies (Must be covered)
- d. Emergency information for children (Must be covered)

Program Hours of Operation

1306.32

- The Early Head Start Program Calendar is approved annually by the Policy Council.
- *Early Head Start Mobile!* provides year round services (to infants, toddlers and pregnant mothers.)
- Care and education services for children are provided from 8:00 am – 3:30 pm each day.
- Working hours for teaching staff are 7:30 am – 4:00 pm daily with a 30 minute break. Break schedules are coordinated by the center director.

Arrival **1304.22**

- The Early Head Start classrooms open each weekday at 8:00 a.m. ALL CHILDREN MUST BE ACCOMPANIED TO AND FROM THE CLASSROOM BY A PARENT OR GUARDIAN.
- Parents and children are to be warmly greeted by name each morning.

- Utilize arrival time as an opportunity to exchange information about the child, the program and to minimize separation issues.
- Perform a daily health check in the presence of the parent and respectfully discuss any health issues.
- Ask the parent to share pertinent information such as how the child slept and ate, his/her mood or any family events which might affect the child.
- If the child was absent the previous day, emphasize that the child was missed and that you are excited the child is returning. Secure the written explanation for the absence from the parent. Have paper and pen available for parents to write the explanation before departing if necessary
- Set up an activity each morning that parents and children can share for a gradual transition to separation.
- Assure the parent the child will be alright and will have a good day.
- Assist the parent(s) to understand the importance of saying goodbye and hold the child, assisting him/her to say goodbye to the parent(s).
- We encourage parents to bring children to the center as early as possible. **HOWEVER**, there is **NO** cut off time for arrival; parents may drop their children off at the center at **ANY** time during service hours (8:00 am – 3:30 pm).

Departure 1304.22

- Warmly greet the parent by name when the parent arrives for pick-up.
- Share with the parent school readiness activities which occurred during the day.
- Provide each parent with a completed Daily News Report. Review the report with the parent. If center communications are to be disseminated, be sure to point out the note or bulletin to the parent.
- Prior to releasing the child the teacher is to perform a final health check and document as appropriate. Teachers are to ensure that the child is clean and dry prior to release.
- Share any accident/incident reports with the parent, pointing out any area of the body which may have been bruised, bumped or scratched.
- Inquire about the family's plans for the evening and whether there are special needs which the program might be able to support.
- Remind the parent about the school readiness goal(s) and share ideas and resources which parents can use to support those goals.
- Encourage the child with assurances that you are looking forward to seeing him/her the next day.
- Reassure and comfort the child whose parent is late.

Parent Sign-In/Sign-out Procedure 1304.22

- The parent, or other authorized adult, must complete the sign-in log upon arrival each morning and prior to departure in the afternoon.
- The time of arrival and pick-up must be completed by the parent or authorized adult. The teacher must check the log for each arrival and departure.
- The signature must include both a first and last name and must be legible.
- If the adult is unfamiliar to the staff please alert the center director so that the adult's identify can be verified and that the person is authorized to pick up the child.
- The signature transfers responsibility for the child to the center staff. The Early Head Start staff is responsible for the child until an authorized adult signs the child out of the classroom.

Releasing Children 1304.22

- The Early Head Start day ends at 3:30 pm for children. Parents are encouraged to pick up their child at or before 3:30.
- Parents must sign their child in and out each day in the classroom. Signature must be legible and must include both first and last name.
- On occasion, parents may be late. At **NO** time can a parent or guardian be asked to pay a late fee.
- If a parent or guardian is consistently late picking up their child, the teacher will complete the *Child-Family Concern/Referral Form* and submit it to the Center Director. The Center Director will review the form and the documentation and submit it to the Family Engagement Coordinator. Documentation (copy of sign-in for several weeks and center action) must be attached. Please note that the concern must also be documented in ChildPlus.
- Center staff members are responsible for the safety and well -being of children from the time a child enters the center until the child is picked up. Children may be released to an authorized adult only and will be allowed to leave the center under the following conditions:
 - (a) with the parent; or
 - (b) with an individual listed on the emergency information section of the application or custody authorization; or
 - (c) Under no circumstances will a child be released to someone under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

- Center staff members are required to view picture identification for any individual unfamiliar to the teachers and center director.

Attendance for Children 1305.8

- Daily attendance is monitored by Early Head Start. Programs are expected to maintain 85% average daily attendance.
- Please encourage parents to bring their child every day and to let you know if their child will not be attending (illness, trip, appointment, etc.).
- The classroom teacher will initiate contact on the second day of absence. Contact details and reason for absence will be submitted to the Center Director and will be documented in ChildPlus.
- On the third day of consecutive absence, the Health and Disabilities Coordinator will contact the parent. In coordination with the Family Engagement Coordinator, a determination will be made as to the appropriate follow-up. In the event the parent cannot be contacted an unscheduled home visit will be made.
- After a child accumulates four **unexcused** absences, the Family Engagement Coordinator will make a home visit or will meet with the family face-to-face to determine the need for family services measures.
- The attendance policy is included in the parent handbook.

Extra Clothing for Children

- All parents are encouraged (but not required) to bring a change of clothing for their children.
- Centers are also required to have extra seasonally appropriate clothing available for children. Center Director will ensure availability of appropriate sizes as needed.
- Centers are required to ensure that each classroom has sufficient seasonal clothing to ensure children have appropriate dress for outdoor play at all times.
- At departure teachers are required to ensure that each child must be dressed in appropriate attire which is clean and dry.
- When extra clothing is not available the center director is required to contact the Family Engagement Coordinator for additional clothing resources.

Parent Engagement 1304.40

- Early Head Start believes that parents are the primary educators of their children. The program makes every effort to assist parents in this important role by offering family engagement opportunities for children and parents at each center.
- Parents also participate in community based programs and are encouraged to continue educational training through various programs offered in the community.
- The Early Head Start program is designed to offer activities of interest to the parents as well as the children. Parents are encouraged and invited to all trainings for Early Head Start teachers.
- Parents will be notified of trainings at Gulf Regional Early Childhood Services or through other agencies which would be beneficial.
- Parent involvement is an important component of the Early Head Start Program. The Early Head Start staff must be committed to involving the parents in all aspects of the educational program for their children. Teachers work to establish as much communication with each parent as possible. This is done in many ways, including:
 - Day to day interactions with parents
 - Home visits
 - Parent volunteers - in the classroom, encouraged and scheduled regularly;
 - Parent conferences
 - Notification of parent meetings, parent activities, special class activities etc.; and
 - Parent newsletters

Policy Council 1304.50

The Policy Council is the governing body for the Early Head Start Program. It is comprised of two types of representatives: parents of currently enrolled children (at least 51%) and representatives from the community. Annually each Early Head Start center elects Policy Council Representatives during the first Parent Committee meeting in September. Representatives to the Policy Council are limited to three years of service.

The Council is formed at the beginning of the program year. The Policy Council meets monthly, or as scheduled and is charged with providing program governance over the Early Head Start program. Their responsibilities include approving the annual budget, applications for

refunding, self-assessment, staff hiring, selection criteria, service plans, and policies and procedures. They provide oversight and receive information about enrollment, school readiness outcomes, and other initiatives and activities. Additionally the Policy Council Representatives participate in program planning and self-assessment.

Each center has an area designated for parent information. This area includes Policy Council information which is updated monthly. Additionally, information and reports are available on the web site. These reports include Policy Council Minutes, School Readiness Plan and Progress Reports.

Parent Committees 1304.50

Parent Committees are comprised exclusively of parents with currently enrolled children. The Parent Committees meet monthly at the center. The Parent Committee responsibilities include: advising staff in developing and implementing center program, policies activities and services; planning and participating in informal and formal activities for parents and staff; assist with recruitment efforts; screening applicants for employment. Parent Committees elect committee officers and representatives for the Policy Council. Policy Council Representatives serve as a link to the Policy Council. The Center Director and the Family Engagement Coordinator assist the Parent Committees with initial organization, training and support.

Documentation Of Parent Contacts 1304.21

- Staff is required to document contacts with families of children currently enrolled in the Early Head Start Program. This includes documenting all conferences, home visits, parent's center visit, Partnership Agreements/follow-up and any notes or letters.
- All notes and letters sent home are to be copied and put in the child's folder.
- Parent correspondence is to be approved by the Center Director. Documentation of all correspondence is maintained in the center files.

Daily Health Check 1304.22; 1304.20(d)

Teaching staff will conduct health checks on a daily basis at the beginning and end of each day.

1. The teaching staff will check each child upon arrival using the *Daily Health Check* form as a guide. This routine should be accomplished in a non-threatening manner.

2. Any abnormal findings should be documented on the back of the *Daily Health Check* form and reported to the center director. The center director will evaluate the child and determine the appropriate actions to take.
3. If a child appears to be ill, then the center's exclusion protocols will be followed.
4. Completed Daily Health Check forms will be kept in the child's files at the center.

Immunization Records 1304.20(a)

- A current Certificate of Immunization issued by the State of Alabama is required for all children on the first day of attendance.
- Each child's Certificate of Immunization must be updated according to the expiration date indicated on the certificate.
- It is the center director's responsibility to ensure that each child enrolled has a valid up-to-date certificate. Under no circumstance can a child remain in the Early Head Start classroom with an expired Certificate of Immunization.
- Each month, the Health & Disabilities Coordinator will forward to the center director a list of children, whose certificates are expiring. The center director and the teacher will work with parents to schedule immunization updates. Contacts will be documented in ChildPlus.
- The family is to be referred to the Health and Disabilities Coordinator if the parent does not follow-up with immunizations.
- The Health and Disabilities Coordinator will assist the parents with scheduling and accessing services. Documentation of all contacts and assistance will be maintained in ChildPlus.
- The immunization record will be filed in the child's licensing file in the Director's office. A copy of the Certificate of Immunization is included in the Early Head Start child health file.

Physical Examinations 1304.20(a)

Parents are to provide documentation of a current completed physical exam prior to the first day of attendance.

Approximately one month before each well-child visit, the Health and Disabilities Coordinator provides the teacher with parent communication about the upcoming deadline. The classroom teacher is responsible for disseminating the letter to the parent and for initiating a discussion of the importance of the visit.

The Health and Disabilities Coordinator will enter all documentation related to the well-child visit into ChildPlus.

Documentation of all well-child visits is to be forwarded to the Center Director. The Center Director is responsible for forwarding the documentation to the Health and Disabilities Coordinator upon receipt.

Dental Screenings and Examinations 1304.20(a)

All children will have a dental home established within 90 days of enrollment.

Early Head Start contracts with Franklin Medical to provide oral screenings for each classroom during the fall.

Beginning at twelve months of age children are required to provide documentation of an oral exam by a dentist or health care professional. The Health and Disabilities Coordinator will work with the teacher to provide assistance to parents in scheduling appointments and/or follow-up.

All documentation of dental exams and follow-up are to be copied and forwarded to the Health and Disabilities Coordinator.

Oral Health 1304.20 (a)

- Teachers **will assist** children once daily, in conjunction with a meal, with brushing their teeth for a minimum of 30 seconds.
- Children one year of age will be provided a pea size amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Children two years of age will be provided a smear of fluoride toothpaste. Infants under one year of age will have their gums wiped with gauze and water.
- Toothbrushes are provided by the Health & Disabilities Coordinator and are replaced periodically as needed.
- Procedures for brushing teeth are to be posted in each classroom to serve as a reminder for children and staff.

Hand Washing 1304.20(d);1304.22(a-f)

Early Head Start staff and all other adults working in the classroom will teach and model appropriate hand washing practices in order to lower the risk of spreading communicable diseases. Hand washing procedures will be posted near the sink in each classroom and rest room.

Staff and children will wash their hands whenever hands come in contact with body fluids and at the following times:

1. Upon entering into a classroom (staff, children, and guest)
2. After toileting or changing diapers.
3. After assisting a child with toilet use.
4. Before and after eating meals or snacks.
5. Before food preparation, handling, or serving. (including setting the table)
6. Before and after using disposable gloves.
7. After coughing or sneezing.
8. After inspecting hair for lice.
9. Before and after giving medications.
10. After playing outdoors.
11. After messy play indoors.
12. Other times as appropriate.

Short-Term Exclusion 1304.22(b)

1. A child will be excluded from attending Early Head Start if he/she has a contagious illness or exhibits any of the following symptoms:
 - a. Temperature of 100 degrees or more taken axillary (under arm, this equates to 101 degrees). If using any other type of thermometer the temperature must equate to 101 degrees.
 - *Temperature must be taken twice. Once by the teacher, and a second time by director or other administrative staff*
 - b. Nausea, vomiting, or severe stomach pain
 - *Vomiting: Exclude after 2 or more occasions within a 24-hour period. Re-admission after vomiting resolves or a health care provider determines the illness to be non-communicable and the child is not in danger of dehydration.*
 - *Severe Stomach Pain: Exclude for abdominal pain that continues for more than two hours or intermittent pain is associated with fever or other signs or symptoms of illness.*
 - c. Diarrhea, frequent, loose or watery stools
 - *Described as three or more stools above what is normal for the child, increased stool water or decreased stool form that is not contained by a diaper and/or clothing*
 - d. Sore throat, acute cold or persistent cough
 - *Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment*

- *Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), no longer has a fever for at least 24 hours or health care provider provided a statement advising to readmit child*
- e. Tears, redness of eyelid lining, irritation followed by swelling and discharge of pus (i.e. pink eye/ conjunctivitis)
- *Children can be readmitted after medical diagnosis to rule out bacterial infection, or 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins*
- f. Head or body lice
- *Lice, scabies or other infestation, re-admission 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and the child is found to be lice free*
- g. Skin rashes or sores
- *Ringworm, 24 hours after treatment has been initiated*
 - *Rash with fever or behavior change until a health care provider determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease)*
 - *Mouth sores with drooling unless a health care provide determines that the child is noninfectious*
- h. Any skin lesion in the weeping stage:
- *Children with open oozing sores, which cannot be covered, will be excluded until:*
 1. *24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment, or*
 2. *Sores are properly covered (e.g. bandage/clothing, staff-gloves), or*
 3. *Sores have healed.*
 - *Chickenpox (varicella), until all lesions have dried or crusted (usually six days after onset of rash.*
 - *Impetigo until treatment has been started*
- i. Unusual drowsiness or tiredness
- j. Any other symptoms suggesting acute illness
2. If a child becomes ill while attending the center, the center staff will notify the parent/guardian to come for or arrange for a designated person to come for the child. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the center staff will phone the emergency contact(s) listed for the child and will request that he/she come for the child as soon as possible. The child will rest away from the other children until someone can come to take the child home.
3. If a child is excluded from the Early Head Start program because of an illness, the Health/Disabilities Coordinator must be notified in writing within 24 hours.

4. When a child in Early Head Start has been diagnosed with a serious communicable illness (those on the *Alabama Notifiable Diseases/Conditions* list), the Center Director will contact the Mobile County Health Department and the Health and Disabilities Coordinator.
5. Center Director will notify parents and staff when a contagious disease/condition has been introduced into the center.
6. The Health and Disabilities Coordinator or Family Services Coordinator will stay in touch with parents until the child has been cleared by the physician or health department to return to the center.

Classroom Sanitation/Cleaning/Safety 1304.53(a) & 13-4.22(e)

- Teachers should follow the Head Start Performance Standards for a safe and healthy learning environment.
- A clean, clutter-free environment sends the message to children, parents, and classroom visitors that Early Head Start promotes cleanliness and organization.
- *Procedures for Cleaning and Sanitizing Classroom Materials* provide teachers with the daily requirements.
- Center Directors will document sanitation and cleanliness of classrooms using the Weekly Sanitation Monitoring Checklist for each classroom.
- Copies of each checklist will be included in the monthly center reports submitted by the 5th of each month.

Classroom Safety 1304.53

- Teachers will conduct a daily safety check of their classrooms using the *Daily Classroom Teacher Safety Checklist*.
- The Center Director will collect the checklists weekly, review the documents and note any non-compliance items.
- The Health and Disabilities Coordinator will review the weekly checklists during the Quarterly Health and Safety audit.

Playground Safety 1304.53

- One teacher from each classroom is required to complete the *Daily Playground Inspection Checklist* each morning.

- Checklists are to be submitted to the Center Directors each morning; teachers will verbally alert the Center Director if safety issues are identified.
- The Center Directors will review the checklists and document follow-up actions.
- All teachers are responsible for reporting any concerns about playground safety which surface after daily playground check to the Center Director.

Medication Administration 1304.22(c)

- It is the policy of Early Head Start not to administer any medication that can be administered at home or during some other time.
- Medication will only be administered for a chronic or disabling condition.
- Refer to the Procedures for Dispensing Medication for the conditions under which medication will be dispensed.
- All teachers are required to participate in training for dispensing medication annually.

First Aid Kit 1304.22(f)

- Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit which is labeled and readily available.
- When children and staff leave the classroom, staff should carry the modified first aid kit that contains gloves, wet wipes, band aids and other essential first aid equipment.
- First aid kits should be supplied **only** with the appropriate items designated by EHS and local licensing.
- First aid kits are to be inventoried monthly by the classroom teachers using the First Aid Checklist. Contents are to restock as necessary.

Accidents or Incidents 1304.27

- In the event of an accident or incident, a report should be completed the day of the accident/incident and the teacher should contact the parent.
- The Center Director will send a copy to the Health/Disability Coordinator for follow-up. The report will be filed in the child's center records.
- **If a child is involved in an accident, incident, or gets injured the following applies:**
 - a. An Incident report should be completed and signed by the staff member who observed or was directly involved in the incident, accident or injury **immediately following the event.** (Incident where two or more children are involved (i.e. biting,

- etc.); no names are mentioned on the injured child's incident notice to maintain confidentiality. If the parent insists on knowing the other child's name, teachers should refer the parent to the Center Director.
- b. Center Director or designated staff member calls the parent/guardian to notify them of the incident, accident, or injury.
 - c. The teacher or other center staff must have the parent sign the *Incident Report* on the day of the incident, accident, or injury.
 - d. The Center Director needs to log the incident, accident, or injury on an *Incident Log*.
 - e. A copy of the *Incident Report* must be sent to GRCMA, Inc. within 24 hours.
 - f. The *Incident Log* is monitored by the Health/Disability Coordinator during quarterly monitoring visits to ascertain possible patterns of incidents.

Nutrition: Food Service/Menus 1304.23 (c)(1)-(6)

- A variety of foods will be served that broaden a child's food experience.
 - New foods will be introduced along with familiar foods to enhance acceptability.
 - Discussion of new or unusual foods before, during, or after meals will be encouraged.
 - Discussion will include color, texture, cultural aspects, etc.
 - Children will be encouraged but not forced to try new foods.
- Food will not be used as a reward or punishment.
- Sufficient time will be allowed for each child to eat. In general, ½ hour is allowed for meal but may be adjusted if necessary.
- Menus for meals and snacks will be posted at each center and will be accessible to parents. A copy of the menu will be provided to each parent on a monthly basis. If there are any substitutions made to the menu, these changes must be indicated on the posted menus.
- Meal time is an extension of learning by modeling language, conversation, social interaction and introducing new foods. All classroom staff, including volunteers, will eat together family style to the extent possible. Children will be encouraged to serve themselves according to their developmental level. Teachers should assist children in their efforts to serve themselves. Family style dining will be an opportunity for both learning and socialization. The focus of the family style dining experience will be on pleasant conversation and simple nutrition education activities (i.e. color, shape, texture of food, etc.).

- Infants will be held while feeding and will not be laid down to sleep with a bottle.
- The Health/Disabilities Coordinator must be consulted regarding any medically-based diets, food allergies, or special diet requests. These requests will be reviewed and accommodated on an individual basis with documentation by a health care provider. The center and teacher will be provided this documentation and assistance will be provided in accommodating the child's needs.

Nutrition: Special Diets and Food Allergies 1304.23

- Parents will be asked to document all diagnosed and suspected food allergies, dietary restrictions or special nutritional needs on the Health and Developmental History form. For children under the age of 12 month, this information will also be documented on the Infant Feeding Plan.
- If dietary restrictions are due to a diagnosed allergy, disability or medical condition, parents must obtain specific documentation of the condition from the child's physician or health care provider using the U.S.D.A. Physician Statement for Food Substitution and/or other documentation provided by the physician. Any recommendations for specific food substitutions MUST be noted in the documentation.
- It is mandatory to have a medical documentation in place to accommodate each child's special dietary need. Information from the parent may be honored for one week from the child's enrollment date. If documentation of the special dietary need is not obtained in this period of time, the child may no longer have his/her special dietary needs accommodated.
- Food substitutions may be made to accommodate for religious or cultural needs of a child. A written statement from the parent/guardian describing the reason must be obtained. If the parent does not provide a written statement, the child will not have his/her meal modified. Any substitutions made must be approved by the Health/Disabilities Coordinator.
- The Health/Disabilities Coordinator will provide the classroom staff, center director, and kitchen staff with appropriate documentation of the food allergy and/or special diet.

This information will be placed in a specific binder or folder that is located in the kitchen. Information should be posted in the kitchen in a confidential manner.

- Teachers are required to post information regarding food allergies and/or dietary restrictions in a confidential manner in classroom.
- The Health/Disabilities Coordinator may coordinate with the contracted nutritionist, or other specialists or staff members to ensure individualization of meals and snacks.
- Any food substitutions on the menus must be documented by the center nutrition staff. Children requiring special diets must have documentation from their physician.

Disabilities 1308

Early Head Start is required to provide services to children with disabilities. At least 10% percent of the children in the program will include children with disabilities. Early Head Start teachers will ensure that all children with suspected disabilities are referred appropriately to determine eligibility for disability services such as early intervention or services through the public school systems. Teachers will individualize instruction with the use of appropriate objectives from each eligible child's Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individual Education Plan (IEP). They will also monitor, document progress, and participate in transition planning.

Referral Process

Referral to Early Head Start Health/Disabilities Coordinator:

- If a teacher has concerns regarding a child's development, based on screening and assessment, observation, or parent concern, they must refer the child to the Health/Disabilities Coordinator for an observation.
- The teacher will document the concern on a *Child/Family Concern form*. This form is to be shared with their center director. The center director must sign the *Child/Family Concern form*. The *Child/Family Concern form* is to be faxed or sent to the Health/Disabilities Coordinator for follow up.

Individualization

- Teachers will use the information in the child's IFSP/IEP to plan appropriately for instructional modifications and individualization.

- Teachers will complete an Individual Development Plan for each child that has an IFSP/ IEP. This form is to be completed every month by the 5th day of the month. It is to be reviewed with the parent and signed by the parent. The completed and signed Individual Development Plan must be faxed or sent to the Health/Disabilities Coordinator by the 5th day of every month. If this cannot be accomplished, then the teacher must discuss the situation with their center director and then contact the Health/Disabilities Coordinator to request an extension.
- Teachers are expected to make accommodations in the learning environment for children based on individual needs. The Health/Disabilities Coordinator is available to observe, assist with classroom modifications, and provide supportive information and materials to Early Head Start teachers for children with suspected or identified disabilities.

Transition/IEP/IFSP Meetings

- Teachers should use every home visit or parent/teacher conference to provide and obtain information from the parent regarding a child's IEP/IFSP outcomes and progress. The Health/Disabilities Coordinator must be provided advanced notification from teachers regarding all scheduled home visits and parent/teacher conferences for children with disabilities. The Health/Disabilities Coordinator will make an effort to be present at all home visits and parent/teacher conferences for children with disabilities.
- Teachers must notify the Health/Disabilities Coordinator of all scheduled IFSP/IEP, or transition meetings that they are aware of, for children with disabilities.
- Teachers will participate in scheduled IEP/IFSP or transition meetings whenever possible. The teacher will be prepared to share information regarding the child's progress to help plan the educational programming for the current and/or next program year.

Mental Health 1304.24

A mental health consultant is available to provide assistance to staff and families in several categories, including:

- Training for staff and parents;
- Individual conferences with staff who need assistance working with specific situations, and parents who have family and/or child development concerns; and

- Observations of all children in the classroom setting to determine needs for assistance, intervention, or evaluation.

Classroom Observation by Mental Health Consultant 1304.20

- The Mental Health Consultant will visit each class or group for the purpose of observing children's behavior, interaction skills, etc.; and to discuss concerns with teaching staff.
- Observations will be pre-arranged with the Health/Disability Coordinator, and the consultant's presence in the class should not detract from the planned activities. The mental health consultant will be observing the Early Head Start classroom as a whole. Individualized observations are administered for children as requested.
- Observation of a particular child may not be done without the parent's written permission.
- If a teacher has specific concerns to discuss with the consultant, this should be done privately. The Mental Health consultant will complete the classroom observation form as well as make any additional notes or comments necessary. Information from these observations will be shared privately with the Health/Disability Coordinator and Education Coordinator.
- The Mental Health Consultant will forward all information to the Health/Disability Coordinator.
- At any time, the teacher may request assistance, or an observation of any individual child, if she feels there is a need. The teacher should provide documentation of the behavior exhibited to the Center Director and the Education Coordinator. They will discuss the needs of the particular child with the Health/Disabilities Coordinator.
- The Health/Disabilities Coordinator is responsible for requesting individualized observation on the child in question. Under certain circumstances, the Health/Disabilities Coordinator and Education Coordinator will observe the child and determine if the Mental Health Consultant needs to do an observation on the child.
- If there is a need for the child to be observed by the Mental Health Consultant, then a written permission form must be signed by the parent. The teacher is responsible for getting the permission slip signed by the parent.
- A copy of the permission form should be sent to the Health/Disabilities Coordinator to be filed in the child's office folder.
- Following the Consultant's observation, a meeting will be held with the parent to discuss the findings and any follow-up that may be needed.

Outside Playtime 1304.53(a)(1)

- A minimum of one hour of outside playtime, 30 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes in the afternoon, is required every day, as weather permits.
- Outside play is a part of the daily schedule and is an important part of the child's learning experience.
- Activity plans must include plans for extending the learning into the outdoor environment at all times.
- **The minimum expectation is that children go outside when the temperature is between 35 degrees and 95 degrees and it is not raining.** Consideration should be given to heat index factors and wind chill factors. If and when stormy conditions occur while outside, the children should be brought in immediately. Use caution and closely observe children for signs of being too hot or too cold while outdoors.
- Water must be provided for children to drink on the playground each day.
- In cooler or cold months, dress children in layers to keep them warm. In warmer or hot months, protect children from the sun by playing in shaded areas.
- Clothing is to be maintained at the center to ensure that all children have access to outside clothing appropriate for the weather conditions.

Receiving New Children and Families

- New children will be enrolled in Early Head Start classrooms as soon as openings occur.
- It is important to be very friendly with parents and children to and make them feel welcome.
- Your initial attitude affects how parents perceive the program and how comfortable they feel leaving their child.
- Transition plans will be developed with new parents and may vary in length based on the circumstances of the family.

Supervision of Children 1304.53

- Two teachers are required to be in the classroom at all times.
- Staff must be actively involved with the children during classroom time and outdoor play.
- Paperwork, phone calls and other tasks should be left until the children have been dismissed.
- Teachers are to position themselves in the classroom and on the playground so that they can see all children at all times.

- Teachers are not to gather and talk with other adults while supervising the children.

Rest Time 1304.22 (e)(7)

- A calm, quiet atmosphere should be created in order to provide a restful experience for children. Adult voices should reflect the intended mood of rest time.
- Cribs and cots must be separated by at least 3 feet on all sides to prevent the spread of contagious diseases and to ensure easy access to each child.
- At no time is a child to be forced to go to sleep. Children should be allowed to have quiet activity time or choose a book. Playing quiet music, rubbing a child's back, just sitting near a restless child, or holding him often helps.
- Schedules for infants are individualized and based on each child's specific needs. Infants have different sleep patterns and different ways of falling asleep.
- Teachers are to be able to visually see each child at all times. Classrooms without natural lighting are required to provide adequate lighting for visibility.

Socialization 1304.21

Tips for helping children with socialization include:

- Observe children, read the situation, then act.
- Change the environment – add or reduce materials
- Offer choices – create a balance of power.
- Help children with irritabilities – be there for the child.
- Focus on “do’s” instead of “don’ts”.
- Model appropriate behavior.
- Provide acceptable alternatives.
- Appreciate and encourage pro-social behavior.
- Share concerns about hurting.
- Help children make connections.
- Teach words to express strong emotions.
- Use hugs and humor.

Confidentiality 1304.52(ii)

- Upon employment all teachers working with Early Head Start are required to review and sign the Early Head Start Mobile! **Confidentiality Policy** which includes the document *Guidance: Confidentiality Policies and Procedures*.
- All employees are expected to exercise confidentiality of information concerning children, children's records, employee situations, and families.
- Any breach of confidentiality will result in disciplinary measures or termination. Confidential information should never be discussed when children are present.

Keep in mind the following:

- Family's phone numbers and addresses must be secured and out of sight of non-staff individuals. Phone numbers and information on children cannot be shared with anyone other than staff.
- Children's folders must not be left unattended and must be stored in a locked cabinet. Do not leave folders out when you are absent from the room.
- The teacher must not discuss individual children or families in the presence of other children or parents.

Please advise parents not to openly discuss their child or any other child's behavior or situation. If needed, staff should schedule a conference at a time when privacy can be ensured.

Standards of Conduct Policy 1304.52(h)(i)

- *Teachers working with Early Head Start children receive training on the Standards of Conduct Policy upon employment, then annually during Pre-service.* During said training participants are required to sign the Policy to document their understanding of the policy and consequences for violations.
- Parent volunteers are also expected to adhere to the *Standards of Conduct*.

Child Abuse and Neglect 1304.22(5)

Child Abuse and Neglect training is required annually for all staff working with Early Head Start children. Anyone who suspects the occurrence of child abuse or neglect must report it to the Department of Human Resources.

If you observe suspected abuse or neglect please do the following:

- a) Report to the Center Director and call the Department of Human Resources to report your suspected abuse.
- b) The person witnessing the incident, or suspecting Child Abuse and Neglect are required to complete a written incident report on Child Abuse and Neglect Form. The form is to be faxed to the Family Engagement Coordinator, with a copy retained by the reporter. **DO NOT SEND A COPY OF THE REPORT HOME** unless directed to do so.
- c) Center Director will call the Early Head Start administration office to report the suspected abuse to the Family Engagement Coordinator. Family Engagement Coordinator will report suspected abuse to Early Head Start Director.
- d) The Center Director implements the system for complying with the child abuse and neglect requirements. In the absence of the Center Director, the Family Services Coordinator may assist staff.
- e) The teacher will objectively document the incident on a separate contact form and keep it filed separately from the child's folder and in a locked place.

In no way does this procedure for reporting an incident take away the teaching staff's right or responsibility to report an incident. It is strictly set up in this manner to protect the teacher/family relationship with Early Head Start.

- f) If a representative from the Department of Human Resources comes to your classroom, ask for a work identification card or badge. All staff and volunteers are required to cooperate fully with the Child Protective Services investigation.

Materials/Supplies 1304.53(a)(b)

- All furnishings, supplies and materials purchased with Early Head Start funds are the property of Early Head Start Mobile!. Any person who leaves employment with the Early Head Start Program will not remove any records, documents, furnishings, supplies, materials or teacher resources from the classroom or center.
- Teachers are required to complete an annual inventory of all classroom materials. The inventory will include items and quantities as well as condition of said items.

- A copy of each classroom inventory is to be submitted by the Center Director to the Education Coordinator as scheduled on the program calendar.
- Teachers will inform the Education Coordinator of any items which are damaged at the time the damage occurs. The Education Coordinator will determine whether the item is to be repaired or discarded.

Cell Phones

- Cell phones are prohibited from all Early Head Start Classrooms. Walkie Talkies have been provided at each center to facilitate communication.
- Use of cell phones in the classroom may result in termination.

Fees 1305.9

- Under no condition may Early Head Start families be charged fees. Money is not to be collected for services or required for enrollment.

In-Kind Contribution 1304.51(h)(1)

- At least 20% of the total Early Head Start budget must come from in-kind services. In-kind is everyone's responsibility.
- Any services or goods received by the Early Head Start program are considered in-kind services.
- In-kind volunteer hours and goods and services must be carefully documented using appropriate forms.
- The collection of data and proper completion of the in-kind forms for centers is a joint effort between the Center Director, teachers, and the families.
- Staff can individually solicit or accept donations or gift cards from any person or company only if the funds are related to generating revenue for the benefit of the program's Early Head Start children and families.
- Funds may not be solicited, collected, or tabulated during work hours.
- Any person or company indicating a wish to donate to the Early Head Start Program should be referred to the Center Director.

Staff Attendance/Leave

Teachers working with Early Head Start children are to adhere to the policies and procedures established at the center of employment.

Staff Evaluations 1304.52

- All staff will be evaluated annually and shall establish annual goals to improve individual performance skills.
- Evaluations shall be used to inform employees of their performance, as an aid to improving performance and as a basis for continuing employment.
- The first classroom observation will be made during the staff member's initial 180-days.

Training and Technical Assistance 1304.52(k)

- The Early Head Start program is committed to providing quality training for its staff as an on-going process. All training necessary to enable staff to adequately perform their job responsibilities and to meet the requirements of the Performance Standards is provided.
- Each staff member is responsible for keeping documentation of training attended and submitting the documentation/ certificates to the Center Director who will forward said documents to the Education Coordinator.

Resignation

- If a teacher makes the decision to resign, an exit interview may be requested. A two week mandatory written notice is required.
- Only the Early Head Start Director has the right to waive this notice.

Chain of Command

- Communication between center staff and Early Head Start staff is the responsibility of the Center Director.
- Teachers are employed by individual centers and not by GRCMA, Inc.
- Teachers are required to discuss all problems, concerns and issues with the Center Director.
- The Center Director will make the initial contact when assistance is needed from one of the Service Area Coordinators.
- Please do not call or discuss concerns about classroom situations, families or issues without including the Center Director in the discussion.

The Early Head Start Teacher

- Plans and implements curriculum for infants and toddlers according to Head Start Performance Standards using Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos as a framework
- Implements the School Readiness Plan.
- Models appropriate language and grammar.
- Provides primary care, implementing routines, for infants and toddlers.
- Oversees the implementation of a developmental screening tool for each child within 45 days of enrollment; documents results in ChildPlus within one week of completion.
- Implements lesson activity plans and learning experiences to encourage social emotional development, physical development, cognitive development, language and literacy development and approaches to learning.
- Assesses children using developmental assessments as scheduled; documents developmental assessments using appropriate software within one week of completion.
- Reinforces the role of the parent as primary care giver and educator of the child.
- Supports and serves as a resource to the families in facilitating partnership goals by assessing their strengths, interests and needs.
- Builds a close, personal relationship with each child, while creating a warm, accepting and developmentally appropriate environment which encourages the cognitive, physical, emotional and social development of the infant/toddler and family.
- Coordinates all work in the classroom; prepares and coordinates availability of appropriate resource materials.
- Maintains classroom files on children and insures confidentiality of records.

- Maintains health and safety standards for children, classroom volunteers and staff.
- Completes daily safety checklists in a timely manner (Daily Classroom Checklists and Playground Safety Checklists).
- Promotes good health and nutrition and provides an environment that contributes to the prevention of illness. Complies with daily cleaning and sanitizing procedures.
- Participates in staff meetings, trainings and appropriate special events, as scheduled by the center and by Early Head Start.
- Submits paperwork accurately and on time as required by program timelines.
- Submits and maintains accurate time cards/sheets as required. No one may accrue over 40 hours per week or work past the assigned hours without Early Head Start and/or Center Director's prior approval.
- Adheres to center dress code policy.
- Restricts eating and drinking in the classroom. Sits with and eats the same food as the children during meal times. Note: Teachers cannot order or bring food to the center to be eaten in the classroom.
- Provides a positive role model for Early Head Start at the center and in public.
- Refrains from socializing while on duty. Remains attentive and engaged with children at all times.
- Ensures that two teachers are with children at all times.
- Staff members will respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability.

- Demonstrates knowledge of fire, tornado and other weather-related safety procedures, and all emergency preparedness procedures. Ensures that primary and secondary emergency evacuation routes are to be posted in the classroom. Updates emergency contacts periodically.
- Adheres to non-smoking and tobacco use prohibition on center site.
- Completes other relevant duties, as assigned in a professional manner.