

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Subject: Mental Health Services

Policy: Mental health services will be provided for children, parents, and staff to address behavioral concerns.

Policy Council Approval: 5/12/11

ESC Board Approval: 6/29/11

Related Regulations: 1304.24(a)

Operational Procedures:

1. Upon request, the Mental Health Coordinator (MHC) will meet and discuss with each parent, any concerns he/she may have about their child entering Head Start, regarding problem behavior, social skills, separation anxiety, development issues, special needs, and available resources. The MHC will attempt to meet the needs of the parent, child, and family.
2. The MHC will address any behavioral concerns expressed by the parent at enrollment, identified during enrollment or classroom observation, or in the form of a Mental Health Referral by the classroom teacher.
3. Head Start parents will sign a Consent for Head Start Mental Health/Behavioral Services form at enrollment which will be placed in the child's Head Start folder. This form allows the MHC to observe the child in the classroom, and provide strategies/interventions as needed to the staff and family.
4. The MHC will assist the teaching staff by facilitating the completion of the DECA and implementing DECA strategies to address areas of concern.
5. The MHC will observe children as concerns arise and following the Behavioral Concern Procedure – flow chart.
6. The MHC will seek guidance from mental health or child development professionals as needed and/or requested by teachers, parents, or student support/intervention teams.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Subject: Mental Health Observations

Policy: Mental health services will be provided through observation and follow-up as needed.

Policy Council Approval: 5/12/11

ESC Board Approval: 6/29/11

Related Regulations: 1304.24

Operational Procedures:

1. The Mental Health Coordinator (MHC) will observe each classroom setting throughout the school year.
2. The Classroom Mental Health Observation tool will be completed within the first semester of the school year by the MHC and will be reviewed with the teaching staff.
3. Each child will be observed in the classroom setting. As concerns arise, the MHC will document the observation regarding unusual, exceptional or normal behavior patterns, as well as the development of age-appropriate social skills, and mental health needs.
4. The documentation will be placed in the child's Head Start folder, as well as in the Child Plus database.
5. Concerns regarding the child's observation will be discussed with the teacher and parents to provide assistance, guidance, or follow-up as needed.
6. The teacher, parents and Head Start staff will meet regularly to develop/follow-up with the Individual Positive Guidance Plan. They will track progress and make changes as needed.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Subject: Mental Health Referrals

Policy: Referrals will be made to the Mental Health coordinator (MHC) by Head Start staff or parent/guardian in response to behavioral or mental health concerns about a child.

Policy Council Approval: 5/12/11

ESC Board Approval: 6/29/11

Related Regulations: 1304.24

Operational Procedures:

1. When an in-house referral is received, the Mental Health Coordinator (MHC) will review the child's folder and discuss the behavioral and mental health concerns with the child's teacher, and other appropriate Head Start staff.
2. The MHC will observe the child in the classroom setting, following the Behavioral Concern Procedure.
3. The MHC will schedule a conference or home visit with the parents and teacher to discuss/assess the needs of the child/family and behavioral concerns. At this meeting, the MHC, teacher, and parents will create and implement an Individual Positive Guidance Plan (IPGP). Once this is in place, and all are in agreement to utilize the IPGP to help with behavioral concerns, a follow-up meeting will be scheduled to evaluate the progress of the behavioral concern. This will include ongoing consults with MHC Supervisor, as appropriate. The team will determine if the guidance plan is successful, and if any revision is necessary.
4. The MHC will work with the family, teacher, and child for continued support, offer guidance and encouragement, make outside referrals as needed, maintain contact with the teacher regarding progress and effectiveness of the guidance plan, with a goal of helping the child to be successful in the Head Start program.
5. If the child's mental health issue and/or behavior problem does not improve with the intervention of the MHC and the implementation of the IPGP, the case will be presented to the Student Support/Intervention Team further suggestions, interventions, and recommendations. The MHC will continue ongoing discussions with the MHC supervisor, as appropriate.
6. The MHC will work with the student, teacher, and family throughout the year or until satisfactory improvement is achieved to resolve the mental health concerns of the child.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Policy Council Approval: 5/12/11

Subject: Mental Health Training/Resources for Parents and Staff ESC Board Approval: 6/29/11

Policy: Mental health services will include parent education on mental health issues and access to resources.

Related Regulations: 1304.24; 1304.40 (b); 1304.41

Operational Procedures:

1. The Mental Health Coordinator (MHC) will work with the families of the Head Start student to recognize the mental health needs of the family and provide information on community services that can meet specific needs of the child and family.
2. Head Start staff will assist families in locating community services and resources. Resources will include the resource number 211, the nationwide information and referral system number.
3. The MHC will provide parents with information regarding agencies that serve the community for crisis intervention for various needs of parents, families, and children dealing with such issues as alcohol/drug addiction, depression, and other mental health disorders.
4. The Mental Health Coordinator (MHC) will offer information and resources that provide parent trainings and encourage Head Start families to attend the classes.
5. The parent trainings will provide information to help parents learn how to effectively deal with behavioral problems and promote positive parenting skills.
6. The MHC will provide ongoing support to staff throughout the school year to provide information regarding dealing with children with mental health issues. Ongoing support and resource information will also be provided for staff regarding their own mental health issues. The MHC will keep documentation regarding mental health services to the Head Start staff on the Assistance for Staff Tracking form.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Subject: Mental Health Schedule

Policy: The Mental Health Coordinator (MHC) will follow a schedule of sufficient frequency to ensure that all classrooms are visited on a regular basis.

Policy Council Approval: 5/12/11

ESC Board Approval: 6/29/11

Related Regulations: 1304.24

Operational Procedures:

1. The MHC will post a schedule in each classroom that will be visible to teachers, Head Start staff, and parents. The schedule will outline the dates and times that the MHC will be in each classroom during the school year. The MHC will notify any changes in their schedule via phone call or email.
2. During classroom visits, the MHC will collaborate with Head Start staff to address and identify mental problems that children, parents, or Head Start staff may be encountering.
3. The MHC will collaborate with the teacher to address and identify problems that students are having with mental health and behavioral issues.