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FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

2 AUTHORIZED RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Children are to be released only to their parents or guardians as listed on the Consents, Authorizations, and Releases Form, or to those persons listed by the parents or guardians as emergency contacts. In cases where staff does not know the identity of the parent, guardian, or emergency contact person picking up the child, staff must see identification. Adults listed as emergency contacts must be 18 years of age or older.

In some situations, a parent or guardian might call to inform the center that a person not listed on the Consents, Authorizations, and Releases Form will be coming for the child. If the staff person knows the caller and is certain of his/her identity, a one time Transportation Memo can be completed. The caller must give the name of the person picking up the child and notify that person that the staff person or bus driver will require identification. The parent should be encouraged to add the name to the Consents, Authorizations, and Releases Form. This will be done using the Change of Information Memo. If the staff person is uncertain of the identity of the caller, he/she should ask to call the parents or guardian back, making certain that the number is on record as the parent's or guardian's cell, home or workplace. Additional persons can be placed on the Consents, Authorizations and Releases Form using the Change of Information Memo. **REMINDER: INDIVIDUALS LISTED AS EMERGENCY CONTACTS MUST BE A RESPONSIBLE ADULT WHOSE NAME DOES NOT APPEAR ON THE MEGAN'S LAW REGISTRY, BE AT LEAST 18 YEARS OF AGE AND MUST BE CLOSE TO HOME/CENTER FOR PICKUP/DROP OFF.**

Procedure for child left at the center or returned on bus

If no one is available upon dismissal from the center, or upon drop off from the bus, the center staff person or bus driver will contact the Center Manager. The Center Manager will arrange to have two staff persons remain on site to attend to the child and to attempt contacts to those listed on the Consents, Authorizations, and Releases Form. If the issue is not resolved within 15 minutes from the expected time of pick up, the Center Manager or otherwise designated staff person will contact the Central Office to notify the Family Engagement Team of the situation. **YOU MUST SPEAK DIRECTLY TO A MEMBER OF THE FE TEAM. DO NOT LEAVE IN A VOICEMAIL.** This will be noted as a late occurrence. Upon contact and resolution the authorized adult picking up the child, and the staff person in attendance will be required to initial the Program Requirements Form, indicating the date of occurrence. If no one from the Family Engagement Team is available, contact in order, Director of Operations, Assistant Executive Director, or Executive Director. If no successful contact is made within one hour from the expected time of pick up, the FE Specialist or designee will contact Children and Youth Services or law enforcement if necessary, to arrange for the release of the child.

Once release of the child is authorized by the FE Specialist, Director of Operations, Executive Director, or Assistant Executive Director, the attending staff must obtain official identification from the agency the person represents, and must complete an Emergency Center Release Form. The Emergency Center Release Form is to be filed in the child's file. The incident will be recorded in Child Plus as Family Services event type **HS Transportation**. Action description will be "classroom" or " bus" or in the case of release to another entity, "authorized release of child".

3 CHILD ABUSE

IT IS MANDATED BY THE FEDERAL REGISTER THAT ALL CASES OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT BE REPORTED TO THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES. IT IS FURTHER MANDATED THAT THE LOCAL PROGRAM INSTITUTE A PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES LAW (CPSL).

The LCHS Family Engagement Team is designated to coordinate child maltreatment issues. LCHS staff is required to complete training according to Pennsylvania state law every five years. In addition, LCHS staff will be trained on agency procedure for internal reporting and review of completing required forms annually.

It must be emphasized that Head Start programs do not undertake, on their own, to treat cases of child abuse or neglect. Head Start programs are required, on the other hand, to cooperate fully with the local child protective services (CPS) in their community. They must also make every effort to retain in the program allegedly abused or neglected children, recognizing that participation in the program may be essential in assisting families with abuse or neglect problems. CPS caseworkers are mandated by law not to reveal the name of the referral source, however often the family suspects the source of the report.

Upon orientation/enrollment, Head Start families will be informed of the definition and responsibility of mandated reporters as found in the Family Handbook.

All Head Start employees, bus drivers, bus aides and volunteers are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. This means that if an employee, bus driver, bus aide or volunteer suspects that child abuse or neglect has occurred, that person is required by law to report it. **As a mandated reporter, it is the individual's responsibility to report directly to ChildLine.**

If a Head Start employee receives information from an employee from another agency or anyone not employed by Head Start, that Head Start employee will report directly to ChildLine and follow procedure for internal reporting.

Any person required to report suspected child abuse who, in good faith, reports or causes the report to be made shall have immunity from civil and criminal liability to those actions.

A person required to report a case of suspected child abuse who willfully fails to do so commits a misdemeanor of the third degree for the first violation and a misdemeanor of the second degree for a second or subsequent violation.

STEPS TO TAKE IN REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT:

If a staff person, bus driver, or bus aide has reason to suspect child abuse or neglect as a result of children's comments, apparent injuries, or other warning signs, the following steps should be taken:

1. Complete Report of Suspected Child Abuse, referred to as County "CY47" form (See attached). This is required for reports made online or by phone.

2. The mandated reporter will then immediately report using the online reporting procedure, as required by Pennsylvania state law for mandated reporters. Please go to www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis and follow steps as directed to complete online reporting. The site can also be accessed through the Employees Only section of the LCHS webpage. Click on the link titled "Click here to make an online child abuse report".

(Note: In some cases it may not be possible to place a report immediately, such as when classroom coverage is needed, reporter is on the bus, etc. In such cases, the report must be made as soon as possible, and never later than the end of the school day).

3. You should call the Child Abuse Hotline, ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313 for the following situations:

- If you are unable to access the online system;
- You do not know the county where the incident occurred;
- The suspected abuse and/or neglect you are reporting occurred outside the state of Pennsylvania;
- You are unsure if the child is at imminent risk of harm;
- You have more than 8 alleged perpetrators and/or the child has a list of extensive injuries.

4. Refer to the completed CY47 form/child's file (when available) or Consents, Authorizations, and Releases (emergency) form to supply as much information as possible when making the report. **A report should never be delayed due to lack of information.**

5. Support and assistance can be provided by Head Start Family Engagement Specialist, Regional Nurse or Center Manager as needed. No specialist or supervisor will impede in any way a report of suspected abuse or neglect.

6. Notify the FE Team Leader after submitting the online report. **YOU MUST SPEAK DIRECTLY TO A MEMBER OF THE FE TEAM. DO NOT LEAVE IN A VOICEMAIL.** Notify Center Manager.

- In the event that the FE Team Leader is unavailable, contact an FE Specialist or the Assistant Executive Director, Executive Director, or Center Manager, in that order.
- The FE Team Leader will instruct you to FAX the CY47 forms to the central office directly, or to hand deliver them, if appropriate. The FE Team Leader will send the completed CY47 report to County Children and Youth Services.
- The FE Team Leader will submit a Report of Action to the Assistant Executive Director,

who will submit a copy to the Executive Director.

❖ **IF YOU WITNESS CHILD ABUSE TAKING PLACE, CALL 911.**

❖ **IF ANY CHILD IS IN IMMINENT DANGER, CALL 911.**

Other Languages:

To report suspicions of abuse and/or neglect of children in other languages, please call **ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313**. For TDD (Telephone Device for the Deaf) 1- 866-872-1677. *These numbers are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with caseworkers waiting to assist you.*

For exceptions to online reporting, listed in item 2 (above):

1. Complete Report of Suspected Child Abuse Report, referred to as County “CY47” form (See attached). This is required for reports made online or by phone. Document on the bottom of the CY47 form the name of the person at ChildLine to whom you reported and the time of the call. Forms should be completed in their entirety, as all the information is required when making the written report to authorities. The FE Specialist can assist in accessing information if needed.
2. The mandated reporter will then immediately call directly to ChildLine **1-800-932-0313**.

(Note: In some cases it may not be possible to place a call immediately, such as when classroom coverage is needed, reporter is on the bus, etc. In such cases, the call must be made as soon as possible, and never later than the end of the school day).

- The mandated reporter will place the phone call from a location allowing for privacy.
- Refer to the completed CY47 form/child’s file when available or the Consents, Authorizations, and Releases (emergency) form to supply as much information as possible when making the call. **A call should never be delayed due to lack of information.**
- Support and assistance can be provided by Head Start FE Specialist, Regional Nurse or Center Manager as needed. No specialist or supervisor will impede in any way a report of suspected abuse or neglect.

3. Notify the FE Team Leader following the ChildLine call. **YOU MUST SPEAK DIRECTLY TO A MEMBER OF THE FE TEAM. DO NOT LEAVE IN A VOICEMAIL.** Notify Center Manager once report is made.

- The FE Team Leader will instruct you to FAX the forms to the central office directly, or to hand deliver them, if appropriate. The FE Team Leader will send the completed CY47 report to County Children and Youth Services.
- Immediately send the original forms to the FE Team Leader.

- In the event that the FE Team Leader is unavailable, contact an FE Specialist or the Assistant Executive Director, Executive Director, or Center Manager, in that order.
- The FE Team Leader will submit a Report of Action to the Assistant Executive Director, who will submit a copy to the Executive Director.

If you are unable to make a report directly to Childline by phone or through the online portal, you are required to contact Children and Youth to make the report. Then, make the internal report following normal procedures. **In any case a report must be made to authorities no later than the end of the school day.**

Luzerne County Children & Youth Services: 570-826-8710

Wyoming County Children and Youth Services: 570-836-3131

❖ **IF YOU WITNESS CHILD ABUSE TAKING PLACE, CALL 911.**

❖ **IF ANY CHILD IS IN IMMINENT DANGER, CALL 911.**

Any staff person who suspects that a child in the program has been abused by an employee must make an immediate report following steps above. If an investigation is initiated as a result of the report, the employee will be placed on “Investigatory Suspension” as described in the LCHS Personnel Policies and Practices.

No ChildLine reports, copies of reports or any documentation regarding the suspicion leading up to the report are to be recorded in family/child files. All documentation is kept on record with the FE Team. Reports will be discarded (shredded) at the end of the school year following record retention policies. The family will not be contacted by LCHS staff before or after the report has been made, as it can have a significant, negative impact on the investigation or on the child’s safety.

6 CHILD RELEASE PROCEDURE/MEGAN’S LAW POLICY

Our primary responsibility as a Head Start program is to provide for the safety of all children entrusted to our care. In light of that responsibility and in consideration of concerns regarding our world today, the following procedures will be followed:

► Luzerne County Head Start reserves the right to bar any individual from the premises of Head Start facilities and/or attending any Head Start function or event who is or has:

- Been convicted as a perpetrator of violent crimes or offenses against children or adults
- Considered to pose a danger to children, volunteers or staff due to mental health issues, domestic violence, or suspicion of impairment due to drug or alcohol use.
- Acted in such a way that they would be detrimental to the provision of quality services to children and families (i.e. inappropriate language, breach of confidential information, inappropriate discipline of children)

Additionally, Head Start staff will be updated on a regular basis regarding any individuals registered under Megan’s Law. Any person who is registered as an offender and/or sexually

violent predator under Megan's law will not be permitted to:

- Volunteer in any capacity where there is a potential to have direct contact with children.
- Be on Head Start premises where they may potentially have direct contact with children or in proximity to any Head Start sponsored offsite event.

Head Start staff may release children to a biological parent, even if they are registered offenders under Megan's law, unless a court order has been provided to staff, which prohibits this parent from contact with the child. In this case, staff and bus personnel will follow a safety plan for release of child to the parent. The safety plan will provide for release of the child to take place at the entrance/exit of building and/or door of the bus, thus preventing the parent from entering the facility or bus.

Under no circumstances will a child be released to any other individual (who is not the biological parent) if they are registered under Megan's law.

Additionally, if any Head Start staff are aware of any individual (including biological parents) registered under Megan's Law, who is residing with an enrolled Head Start child, it will be our obligation to report this situation to the appropriate Children & Youth Services office as well as the appropriate police department.

Bimonthly, Family Workers, Nurse Educators, and Family Educators, Pre K Counts Center Managers will cross reference family records with the Megan's Law Registry, and report any situations to the Family Engagement Team Leader. This should be documented in ChildPlus under **event type, Megan's Law**.

No child will be released to any individual suspected of being impaired due to drug or alcohol use.

7 COLLABORATION AND CONSULTATION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Children and Youth Caseworkers and Head Start Family Educators and Family Workers communicate regularly to promote interagency collaboration and avoid duplication of services. For families being mutually served with the family's permission Family Educators or Workers will make monthly contacts to the Children and Youth Caseworker. Head Start Staff will document the contents of the meetings in the Children and Youth Consults module in Child Plus.

7 COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Because of the diversity in interests and needs of families, Family Workers must be familiar with the availability of community services and the quality of such services. Our agency acts as a referral agent to empower parents to seek out the services they need and to help them become more self-sufficient. Some of the ways in which Family Workers assist families in learning how to identify and access community services are:

- *Making appropriate referrals in the family partnership agreement process to community resources that are critical for accomplishing goals;
- *Assisting in locating services;
- *Providing up-to-date service directories;
- *Inviting representatives from various agencies to speak at committee meetings or with individual families;
- *Maintaining displays that include brochures and information concerning community services;
- *Accompanying families to medical, dental and other appointments, when appropriate. This will be done only when all other resources and supports available to the family have been exhausted.
- *Following up on referrals and services to be sure that services meet the families' needs;
- *Working cooperatively with other community agencies with which the family is involved.

In addition to making referrals, family workers conduct clothing drives, assist with food drives, and coordinate distribution of other community donations.

8 CONFIDENTIALITY/ RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Confidentiality can be defined as safeguarding information received in confidence from a family member, co-worker, or other agency and disclosing information only to professionals for the benefit of the family. When information is shared with other professionals within the program or other agencies, the obligation of confidentiality binds all involved. Head Start Performance Standards state that all staff, consultants, and volunteers must follow their program's written confidentiality policy concerning information about children, families, and other staff members.

Included in this policy are the following:

- *Parents and volunteers are prohibited from reviewing any records other than their own;
- *Parents should consent to and sign release of information forms prior to the sharing of information or transfer of records.
- *Information about families is to be shared with other staff persons and/or other agencies ONLY when doing so serves to improve services to the family. When sharing information about families, appropriate releases should first be obtained.

It is important to remember that families have the right to review all of their records.

On occasion our agency receives a request from a family asking for written verification of their own information, such as child's DOB, residency, and/or confirmed dates of their enrollment.

If you receive such a request regarding family records, you are to contact your FE Specialist who will provide the information, based on our data system, to be printed on letterhead. Please allow reasonable time for the letter to be drafted.

Upon the presentation of this type of information the Release of Family Records/Information-not to be mistaken for the general Release of Information form is to be completed and filed in the family file, along with a copy of the letter.

All release of information documents and letters verifying family information are not to be altered in any way or reused for multiple requests and immediately become part of the family file.

9 FAMILY FILES

A family file is kept for each child enrolled in the program. The files are color-coded according to session attended. Files are labeled with child's name, session, teacher's name. Education documents are filed on the left side of the folder. ERSEA, Parent Involvement/Family Engagement, and Health/Nutrition documents are filed on the right side of the folder.

When not in use, all files are to be stored in the cabinet or drawer designated for this purpose. The cabinet/drawer must be kept locked at all times, when not in use. Keys must be kept out of sight, but accessible to appropriate staff. In the case when the Family Worker does not have office space in the same location as the classroom, the original family files remain with them. Teachers may keep their education documents in their classroom, in a designated, locked location. When files are closed out at the end of the year, the teacher's file will be combined into the original family file that the Family Worker is responsible to maintain.

Family file removal procedure is followed when removing files from their locked location. The procedure requires the file to be signed out when taken and signed in upon return. The blue sign in/out sheet remains in place in front of the files.

Upon request, parents/legal guardians can access their own family file. The family file removal procedure will be followed. If information is requested by the family, the Release of Family Records/Information is to be completed, signed by parent and staff and placed in family file, along with a copy of the information released, if that information is not already part of the family file.

It is important that parents be informed of the family file system and that they understand their right to access them. Family/child tracking system and partnership document should be introduced at Orientation and referred to regularly throughout the family's enrollment in the program.

9 FAMILY WORKER/FAMILY EDUCATOR CONSULTATION

- Family Educators and Family Workers who share families served by both Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS) will communicate regularly in order to promote seamless services and to avoid duplication. For families enrolled in EHS and HS the Family Educator will take the lead in developing family goals. Head Start staff will act as support for existing goals and will at times develop additional goals if it is suited to the individual

family situation. The family assessment will be completed three times throughout the year, per schedule, typically by the Family Educator, unless the family was enrolled first in HS and therefore has the assessment in place. In every case, the family partnership process is to be collaborated between both programs. A monthly meeting will take place between the Family Worker and the Family Educator. It is the mutual responsibility of staff to arrange the meeting using the following protocol:

- Monthly meeting between Family Worker and Family Educator is to be scheduled via email.
- The meeting can be face to face or by telephone. **Verbal Contact must be made.**
- The meeting will be recorded in Child Plus under the Monthly Consults Module.
- Information gathered during the monthly meeting will be shared with other center staff as appropriate (i.e. Team Meetings, etc.).

10 FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

Family engagement is an interactive process through which program staff and families, family members, and their children build positive and goal-oriented relationships. It is a shared responsibility of families and professionals that requires mutual respect for the roles and strengths each has to offer. Family engagement means doing with—not doing to or for—families.

At the program level, family engagement involves parents' engagement with their children and with staff as they work together toward the goals that families choose for themselves and their children. It also involves families and staff working toward goals to improve the program. Head Start and Early Head Start staff work together with families, other professionals, and community partners in ways that promote equity, inclusiveness, and cultural and linguistic responsiveness.

From the beginning of life, families nurture their children to be healthy and to develop the capacities they will need to be ready for school and successful in life. Head Start and Early Head Start program staff share these goals and collaborate with families as they work toward these goals.

The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework is an organizational guide for collaboration among families and Head Start and Early Head Start programs, staff, and community service providers to promote positive, enduring outcomes for children and families.

The Head Start PFCE Framework describes the program elements—Program Foundations and Impact Areas—in early learning programs that can work together to positively influence child and family outcomes. The Framework identifies equity, inclusiveness, cultural and linguistic responsiveness, and positive goal-oriented relationships as important drivers for these outcomes. There are 7 Family Outcomes that drive our goal setting with families. The 7 Family Outcomes from the Framework are: Family Well-Being, Positive Parent-Child Relationships,

Families as Lifelong Educators, Families as Learners, Family Engagement in Transitions, Family Connections to Peers and Community, and Families as Advocates and Leaders.

Family Assessment

The Family Assessment is completed collaboratively with staff and families 3 times during a program year. This Family Assessment is related directly to the PFCE Framework where families are assessed on the 7 Family Outcomes (see above).

Based on the results of the Family Assessment, families will establish relevant goals and enter into a Family Partnership Agreement - a joint agreement to collectively work on accomplishing goals. The Family Partnership Agreement is a strengths-based, family driven process, unique to each family. Partnerships are formed through building trusting and supportive relationships with families. In addition, goals a family may have with another agency should be incorporated into Head Start services in order to maximize resources and avoid duplication.

The Family Assessment and goal setting process generally begins at the fall home visit when the staff/family relationship is becoming more secure. The Family Partnership Agreement/goals are updated **at least monthly** in Child Plus.

11 FAMILY SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A Family Services Advisory Committee meeting will be held four times throughout the program year. The Committee is comprised of Head Start staff, families and community members. The purpose of the Advisory Committee is to strengthen existing community partnerships and to develop new ones. The meetings also offer networking opportunities for all participants.

11 HOME VISITS

Home visits by the Family Worker are coordinated to support the partnership between the family and the program. Home visits are valuable in building respectful relationships with parents and in developing a broad understanding of every child in the program. Family Workers are required to make a minimum of two home visits to each family during the program year. However, some family situations may require additional visits. For example, a home visit may be necessary to follow-up on an attendance problem, or to relay information to a parent who has difficulty with written communications.

The first home visit should typically take place between September and the middle of November. The second visit between February and middle of May. The Home Visit Checklist is to be followed during the visit to ensure all pertinent information is reviewed with families.

Family Workers must document instances when parents expressly forbid home visits. In such cases staff must continue to work on building a trusting relationship, which, over time, may provide opportunities for meeting with families in their home.

12 LEGAL CUSTODY

Legal custody documents upon orientation/enrollment: When we receive information regarding custody at orientation/enrollment, the following steps are to be taken: Obtain legal documents from parents/custodians. Retain copy to be attached to the original Consents, Authorizations and Releases form in family file. Indicate that court order is in place/on file on the appropriate areas of the Consents, Authorizations and Releases form. Copy of Consents, Authorizations and Releases to each appropriate party will serve as notice that custody is in place. Following standard procedure, the child will be released only to those persons listed on the form. Legal custody change during the enrollment year: When custody changes during the enrollment year, the following steps are to be taken: Obtain legal document from parents/custodians. Retain copy to be attached to the original Consents, Authorizations and Releases form in family file. Complete Change of Information form, copies to be provided for appropriate center staff and bus personnel and attached to each copy of Consents, Authorizations and Releases form. Copy of Change of Information form will serve as notice that custody is in place. Complete Status Changer which directs MIS to change computer information. Attach copy of the Status Changer to front of application, as instructed on Status Changer. Note: This will be the only time you attach a copy of the Status Changer to the front of application. In the case of foster placement, or return to biological parents and the child is transferred, the file will be forwarded with the child and appropriate information will be gathered on the current family. Family Worker should contact their assigned Family Engagement Specialist to discuss release of records to either party, prior to release.

12 MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT (MAR)

Starting at the end of September, Family Workers will be expected to complete the Monthly Activity Report (MAR). Family Workers will only need to complete one MAR per month, regardless of how many classrooms they work with. The report will be used for monitoring purposes and to help LCHS determine how to best serve our families. The report will be shared monthly through Google Docs. The Family and Community Partnership section of the MAR includes monitoring of Megan's Law follow up.

12 ORIENTATION/ ENROLLMENT (beginning of year)

In home Orientation for Head Start families will be conducted by the Head Start staff. Following Orientation, each family will be required to attend their center's enrollment session. Enrollment sessions will be presented as stations, with each service area providing information following the Enrollment Day Checklist for their area. For Pre K Counts Orientation/Enrollment Sessions will take place at the centers. IT IS IMPORTANT FOR STAFF TO KEEP IN MIND THAT THE ORIENTATION/ENROLLMENT PROCESS IS A BUILDING BLOCK IN THE FORMATION OF THE FAMILY PARTNERSHIP.

ORIENTATION DURING SCHOOL YEAR FOR TRANSFERRING AND NEW CHILDREN

Transferring Children:

1. The Family Worker (HS)/Center Manager(PKC) will fax the following forms to the receiving center: LCHS Pre-Service Team Meeting Emergency Consent form/ Crossover if applicable and Pink Nutrition form. Any important allergy information/restrictions should be indicated on the Pre-Service Team Meeting form.
2. The receiving center is required to review the information. A new Pre Service Team Meeting form is to be completed. If the child has any Health Alerts (medical plan, food allergies) or Center Alerts (custody issue, child/parent needing handicap accessible required) ALL appropriate staff must be informed and sign the LCHS Pre-Service Team Meeting form. ***This will complete the process for the child to attend.***

New Child Orientation during School Year

1. Family Workers will complete some of the orientation process in the center. Teachers can schedule their Home Visit accordingly. Family Workers will complete the following parts of the Orientation Checklist: Emergency Consent Form/Crossover form if applicable, Health Checklist, Nutrition form, Vision Screening form, Program Requirements and Attendance form. Family workers will complete the following parts of Enrollment Checklist: All Family Engagement Station items and all Health/Center Station items.
2. Last and MOST important a team meeting must take place before the child starts. This will be documented on the Pre-Service Team Meeting checklist. ***This will complete the process for the child to attend.*** Remember the teacher will still need to complete their first home visit within the first 2 weeks and continue to complete the Orientation and Enrollment Day checklist.

13 PROFESSIONALISM

Head Start staff must always practice professionalism by safeguarding the confidentiality of families, understanding professional roles, establishing boundaries when working with families, following the mandated reporter policy, maintaining accurate record-keeping systems, and documenting interactions with families.

13 SOCIAL SERVICE ACCOUNT

A small Social Service Fund is administered by the Family & Community Partnerships (FE) Team to be used to assist families in a crisis. Such situations include the need for food, clothing, heat, water, and electricity. Funds for the account are secured through donations from friends of Head Start, parent committees, and community donations. Requests for use of the funds are made to the FE Team using the online Social Service Fund Request format.

13 SUPERVISORY SUPPORT

Head Start staff assist families in identifying strengths and needs and by making numerous referrals to other agencies which are often critical for accomplishing goals or coping with family

circumstances. The needs of Head Start families vary. In addressing the needs of our families, Family Workers and other staff have the support of the supervisory and management teams. When technical assistance or guidance in dealing with a particular family situation is needed, that staff person is directed to contact a specialist in the appropriate area of concentration. For example, concerns in the area of health, nutrition and safety are directed to the Health Team, developmental delays or special needs, Disability Specialist or other member of the Early Childhood Education Team. For child welfare concerns or in the event of family crisis, the Family Engagement Specialists are to be contacted. It is important to remember that the Center Manager is the direct supervisor and is also available for support. Any situation can be discussed with the Center Manager when deciding how to proceed.

14 SUPPORTING FAMILY MEMBERS IN THEIR PARENTING ROLES

Families enrolled in Head Start will be offered opportunities to participate in a research based parenting curriculum that builds on parents' knowledge and offers the opportunity to practice parenting skills to promote children's learning and development.

Family Workers will assume the responsibility of facilitating workshops and parent opportunities, including father-friendly initiatives, in accordance with the agency's established curriculum, in addition to arranging presentations by community agencies and providing opportunities during home visits for parents to review and to discuss concerns about their children.

Head Start has had a long tradition of sensitively working with families of diverse cultures and languages. The physical environment of centers will be inviting and welcoming. The importance of fully integrating parents into every element of the Head Start experience will be emphasized, being respectful of language, gender, and culture.

14 TEAM MEETINGS

Prior to each child's enrollment a mandatory pre-service team meeting will be held. The meeting will include all Education staff and Family Worker. Nurses, Cooks and Nutrition Aides will be included as necessary. The staff will review the information listed on the Pre Service Team Meeting form and sign the form, indicating that information was shared. After the pre service team meeting is completed, this form will be placed in the child's file. Important note, when a staffing change occurs in the classroom or for family worker or regional nurse, a pre service team meeting is to be completed for each applicable child.

Monthly Team Meetings take place in order to share pertinent information about the children and families served. The meeting will include Family Worker and Teacher, and additional center staff as necessary. The monthly team meeting will be recorded in Child Plus Family Services under the Team Meeting Module.

At the meeting, goals as identified through IEP meeting, transition meetings, behavioral goals and Family Partnership Agreements will be reviewed and updated. Updating family partnership goals might include communication to parents, staff responsibility, time frames and progress.

In order to most effectively accomplish the goals of the team meeting, it is important that the

Teacher and Family Worker take necessary time to meet face to face, sharing pertinent information. This is an ideal opportunity to share family goals and collaborations with Early Head Start and other agencies with which the family is involved.

15 OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTS

A variety of opportunities must be created for interaction with parents throughout the year. Meetings and interactions with families are to be respectful of each family's diversity and cultural and ethnic background.

In collaboration with parents, staff will develop a variety of group and individual opportunities to interact with parents on a regular basis, recognizing the customs and beliefs of children and families.

- Work with Parent Committee to plan an array of individual options and group activities;
- Include culturally relevant activities that interest both men and women;
- Plan activities at varying times of the day and week - such as at breakfast, the end of the day, on weekends;
- Respect the uniqueness of each family;
- Consider the needs of family members when planning meetings and activities;
- Honor the primary language of the family.

15 FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAM

Family Literacy classes are held at various Head Start locations throughout the service area. Families interested in Family Literacy/GED classes in areas where classes are not offered at Head Start centers will be referred to other services in the community.

15 PARENT COMMITTEE

Parent Committees must be comprised exclusively of the parents/guardians of children currently enrolled at the center level. They must be established as early in the year as possible.

All parents of enrolled children are automatically members of Parent Committee. Staff and parents are encouraged to work together in a creative manner to identify ways that parents can play a role in supporting the improvement of community services. Ways for parents to influence community services include, but are not limited to:

- * Receiving information about the roles and functions of Head Start policy groups early in the program year, during recruitment and enrollment;
- * Participating actively in **Parent Committee** (and Policy Council) which provide opportunities for developing confidence and skills for further community advocacy;
- * Serving on the Health, Transition and Family Services Advisory Committees;
- * Providing a process for parents to make suggestions, individually or in groups, on

such topics as goals and activities for children, ways staff and parents can help children achieve developmental and educational goals, and the relevance of the curriculum to the culture and language of enrolled families;

- * Involving parents in planning classroom and home activities in areas such as art and music, study trips, storytelling, and preparation of foods particular to their cultures;
- * Becoming involved in community and school groups.

Parents must be provided regular opportunities to work together, and with other community members, on activities that they have helped develop and in which they have expressed an interest.

Parent Committee Meetings are held monthly during the school year. Early Head Start meet six times a year.

Officers may be elected by the parents at the initial meeting. The officers of Parent Committee will be responsible for planning and conducting meetings, with assistance and training being provided by Parent Committee Facilitator (assigned Family Worker or Family Educator). Child care is provided when possible.

When parents choose not to elect officers, the facilitator will take on a more active role and will work to encourage those in attendance to assume various roles to support the group.

Parent Committee Guidelines:

Meetings can take place before, during or after child session times as decided by majority of parents.

Monthly center meeting takes place prior to agency Policy Council Meeting (held 3rd Monday of each month).

Planning for the monthly Parent Committee Meeting involves all staff, with Center Manager overseeing and approving of all activities and scheduling classroom coverage, etc. Information will be shared and plans made during monthly center staff meetings for the following month's Parent Committee Meeting.

Center Manager and all Family Workers are in attendance at each meeting. If Center Managers need assistance with coverage at another center please contact your specialists; this will help ensure you can attend Parent Committee.

Requests for expenditures are made to Center Manager who submits to business office. Each center tracks their own budget by deducting each expense from allocated amount.

Agenda (following to be conducted in any order)

- **Parent Cafe**-time for parents to socialize and enjoy refreshments before meeting time (ask them to arrive 15 minutes before meeting starts)
- **Parent/ Teacher planning time**-takes place in each classroom (5-10 minutes)
Parents meet with their child's Teacher. They are asked for their ideas for lesson plans.
- **Teacher Topic**-aligned with EL standards and domains (5-10 minutes)
This can be conducted by one teacher for all classrooms and can be rotated monthly, or can be presented by more than one teacher, dividing up duties and presenting together. All classrooms will be provided handouts from presentation.
- **Business** meeting following meeting agenda
- **Workshop** provided by LCHS staff or outside presenters **OR parent activity**-choose one
Activity can be parents only or parent/child with children removed from classroom for activity. (Active supervision, with picture card exchange, procedure followed)

Parent Committee Binder Contents:

Parent Committee Guidelines (this document)

List of Teacher Topics

Monthly flyer announcing meeting

Monthly agenda

Sign in (copy of Meeting Inkind Sign in Sheet; submit original to Program Assistant)

Monthly minutes

Parent Committee report to Policy Council

Policy Council Meeting Notes

Workshop Information (handouts etc. if applicable)

Parent Committee ByLaws

17 POLICY COUNCIL OVERVIEW

As required by the Performance Standards, Luzerne County Head Start has established a formal structure of shared governance through which parents can participate in policy making or in other decisions about the program.

Policy Council is comprised of two types of representatives: parents of currently enrolled children and community representatives. Community representatives can be drawn from the local business, public and private community as well as civic and professional organizations and parents of formerly enrolled children. Current parents must constitute a majority (51%) of the members.

Representation is determined by the number of classrooms and the number of children served in Head Start, Early Head Start, and Pre-K Counts. Parents from all program options are represented.

All members must stand for election or re-election annually and must limit the number of

one-year terms to a combined total of three terms. Members of the Policy Council shall - not have a conflict of interest with the Head Start agency.

Policy Council's role includes approving and submitting to the governing body decisions about:

- Active involvement of parents in supporting program operations, including policies to ensure that the agency is responsive to community and parents' needs;
- Program recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities;
- Applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding;
- Budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in policy council activities;
- Bylaws for the operation of the policy council;
- Program personnel policies and decisions regarding the employment of program staff, including standards of conduct for program staff, contractors, and volunteers and criteria for the employment and dismissal of program staff;
- Developing procedures for how members of the policy council will be elected;
- Recommendations on the selection of delegate agencies and the service areas for such agencies.

Head Start parent representatives are elected from their respective Centers at the October Parent Committee meetings. Pre-K parents are invited to submit letters of interest for consideration and approval by the Parent Membership of Policy Council after their October Parent Committee Meeting. Policy Council reorganizes each October. Meetings are held monthly at the Central Office, 23 Beekman St., Wilkes-Barre. Babysitting is available for children of current Head Start and Pre-K parents. Members are requested to provide their own transportation and are reimbursed for mileage at the agency rate.

18 SPECIAL EVENTS

Events that celebrate families, focus on dads, and recognize volunteers are to be planned at the centers.

Recognizing volunteers should be on-going - thank you notes on the bulletin board or in the center newsletter acknowledging those who volunteered each month; thank you notes from the children. Volunteer milestones should be celebrated by the presentation of Volunteer Certificates or Head Start Pin in a significant manner - in the classroom, during Parent Committee or some other special occasion.

Plan events to involve dads to the center; designate "Dads Month" and invite a dad to a special activity or to lunch and/or breakfast each day during that month.

Some centers may be more restricted than others when it comes to space and access to their building beyond traditional Head Start hours and may have to explore off-site activities or join activities planned at another center.

Those with access to their building beyond traditional Head Start hours are to consider hosting evening activities for families:

- family game night
- family activity night

- making a holiday craft, a family banner or family poster
- story telling activity and book sharing event

Invite those from another center who may not have the numbers, the room or building access to conduct such activities on their own.

19 VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

Volunteer recognition is on-going throughout the program year. Parent and community volunteers are recognized for their contribution to the agency. Head Start Certificates are to be awarded to a volunteer once they have contributed a total of 50 volunteer hours.

Family Workers are to determine the most appropriate time and place to present volunteer certificates or pins, always making it a special moment for the volunteer.

Center staff is also encouraged to develop additional ways to acknowledge their volunteers, i.e., photos on bulletin boards, thank you notes, notes from the children, announcements in newsletters and flyers and at Parent Committee meetings and day-to-day interaction with volunteers.

19 WORKSHOPS

Family Workers are required to provide workshops and training opportunities based on the needs of parents. They can take place in conjunction with Parent Committee (time permitting) or as a separate event.

Workshop topics should include but not be limited to – nutrition; early childhood education; food preparation; health and dental health education; literacy; household budgeting, financial literacy education, family finances, and building financial stability; and parenting skills. In addition, representatives from community service providers should be invited to visit centers and meet with parents to provide valuable information and training.

I Am Moving, I Am Learning (Choosy) curriculum should be included in parent training / workshop opportunities. In addition to the introduction at Parent Committee, workshops incorporating Choosy activities should be implemented at centers.

Plan events for specific populations - dads, non-traditional caregivers, grandparents, services for non-English speaking families, etc. Reach out into the community for those who can provide information and assistance to these groups.

Family Workers are to work closely with their Center Manager when arranging these events and are to coordinate with center staff through discussion at staff meetings to ensure no scheduling conflicts exist.

Flyers inviting parents to attend are to be sent out with follow up phone calls to encourage attendance. All parent training is to be documented on the Training Report as well as reported on the Monthly Activity

20 VOLUNTEERING IN LUZERNE COUNTY HEAD START, INC.

Volunteerism is an important part of the Head Start experience. Volunteer opportunities exist for parents, individuals, and organizations in the community to become involved in Luzerne County Head Start (“LCHS”). Examples of volunteerism are reading in the classrooms, Adopt-a-Classroom, assisting with screening for children, serving on Policy Council or Board of Directors, assisting with food drives or health fairs, etc. Head Start programs are required to engage parents and the community in volunteerism and LCHS is required to track and document these volunteer hours.

20 VOLUNTEERS DEFINED

Parent/Guardian Volunteers

The Head Start vision for parent involvement and family engagement is to support parents as their child’s first and most important teacher and to provide every parent with opportunities to be involved in all aspects of the program. Children benefit from this involvement, and so do their parents. Much of the success of the Head Start program has been due to parent involvement. Children benefit when their parents know about and support what is happening in their education. Parents who are involved are more likely to continue that participation throughout their child’s school years. Parents who are involved gain skills in decision making, teaching, management, and advocacy.

Volunteering in the classroom is one of the most helpful ways a parent can become involved, and parents receive classroom volunteer hours. Other family members, such as grandparents, aunts and uncles, are also welcome. Any volunteer who is with the children is a “helper” and is never asked to be responsible for the children or to be alone with the children at any time. (A volunteer is never responsible for taking a child to the bathroom, nurse’s office, etc.)

Direct Volunteers, Indirect Volunteers, and Program Participants

Except for situations where someone might visit the program for a one-time event, all volunteers are required to obtain background clearances, complete a Volunteer Application, receive instruction and/or training, and sign the LCHS *Confidentiality Pledge* and *Standards of Conduct and Professional Ethics*.

Volunteers in LCHS can be either “Direct Volunteers” (those who work directly with the children) or “Indirect Volunteers” (those whose time is counted as volunteer hours but do not have direct contact with children, such as serving on Parent Committee, Policy Council or Board of Directors, engaging in at-home activities with their children, working at a food drive, etc). All Direct Volunteers will be required to have Background Clearances.

Volunteers who attend the center for a one-time visit, such as a Community Guest Reader, are not required to obtain clearances or establish a volunteer file. If they wish to return for additional visits, a packet of information will be given explaining requirements for Direct Volunteers. Parents and guardians who spend time in classrooms as a part of the Family Literacy program are required to have clearances just as other classroom volunteers. If for some reason a Family Literacy Learner is not able to obtain clearances, there are other ways the program requirements can be met. This can be discussed with the Family Literacy Instructors.

Those Parents/Guardians who engage in center activities for which volunteer time is not counted, such as Parent/Teacher Conferences or Parent Training Sessions, and who do not have direct contact with children are considered “Program Participants” and are not required to obtain Background Clearances.

21 BACKGROUND CLEARANCES

Effective July 1, 2015, Pennsylvania law requires that any volunteer responsible for the welfare of a child or having direct routine contact with children are required to have Background Clearances. These include:

- Pennsylvania Criminal History Record Check from the PA State Police; and
- Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance via registration with PA Dept of Human Services

Additionally, a volunteer who has lived outside the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the last 10 years is required to have fingerprints based on federal criminal history (FBI). Volunteers who have been a continuous resident of Pennsylvania for the past 10 years will be required to affirm in writing that they have no issue that would prohibit them from serving as a volunteer.

The PA Criminal History Record Check and PA Child Abuse Clearance are free of charge (as of July 25, 2015) and easy to obtain. LCHS staff are available to assist with this process. There is a fee for fingerprinting. LCHS will reimburse parents or guardians for this fee when they provide a copy of their fingerprint clearance if they are approved for volunteering. Other family members, community volunteers or the agencies they represent will be responsible for the cost of the fingerprint clearances. College students will need to present valid clearances obtained through their college or university.

All clearances will be reviewed in LCHS Human Resources. Background Clearances which are returned with any indications will be reviewed at the administrative level to determine whether or not the applicant will be able to serve as a Direct Volunteer.

How to Apply for Background Clearances

1. PA Child Abuse Clearance. The Child Abuse clearance can be applied for online at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis. If preferred, an applicant can obtain a form from keepkidssafe.pa.gov to apply by mail.

2. PA State Police Criminal Record Check. On-Line application is the only acceptable method for the PA State Police Criminal Record Check via <https://epatch.state.pa.us/> (DO NOT use “www” as part of the address).

3. FBI Fingerprinting. For applicants who have lived in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the previous *consecutive* ten years, without interruption, it will be necessary to sign the Disclosure Form attesting to that fact; form is provided in the Volunteer Packet.

*If an applicant has NOT lived in Pennsylvania for the last 10 years without interruption, it will be necessary to first register for fingerprinting, online at www.pa.cogentid.com, where there are additional instructions. After registering, applicants will print out the registration form to be taken to a designated fingerprint location as directed on the website.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR OBTAINING ALL THREE CLEARANCES, AS WELL AS OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND ON keepkidssafe.pa.gov WEBSITE. LCHS recommends online training presented by the University of Pittsburgh for all mandated reporters. <https://www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu>.

Renewal of Background Clearances

To be considered valid, clearances cannot be older than five years. Background Clearances need to be renewed every five years from the date of certification.

22 REQUIREMENTS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer Packet

Background Clearances Application Forms

Volunteer Application Form-**Copy to be retained at center by Center Manager**

Volunteer Training and Orientation Checklist

TB Forms (risk determination to identify need for Mantoux testing) -**Copy given to Regional Nurse for review and follow up**

Confidentiality Pledge (Signature required)

Standards of Conduct and Professional Ethics (Signature required)

Staff initial appropriate areas and sign label on Volunteer Packet (blue folder) when all required documents are complete.

- Only adults 18 years of age and older are required to have clearances
- Prospective volunteers must submit valid clearances prior to the commencement of services
- Volunteers must report to the Center Manager changes in clearance status within 72 hours, i.e. an arrest, conviction, or any occurrence which might alter their status as a volunteer
- LCHS will retain copies of all required clearances in the volunteer official file held in the LCHS Human Resources Office
- All volunteers are Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect (See Section on Mandated Reporters)

Volunteer Training

Training for parents and community volunteers will be conducted at each center early in the program year by Center Staff depending on availability with subsequent sessions provided as the need arises. *Volunteer training can be provided at any point in the school year.* Training will be provided for classroom volunteers as well as for those who would like to assist in the kitchen, on the buses, assist the Regional Nurse with health-related activities, and assist with clothing and food campaigns. Training will also be provided for those choosing to participate in Parent Committee, Policy Council, Functional Committees, and Advisory Committees. The Volunteer Training checklist will be completed following the Family Handbook section, Volunteering in LCHS.

The first section of the checklist, **About Our Center**, covers center specific items and can be conducted by Center Manager, Regional Nurse, Family Worker or Teacher. **Volunteer Information** can be conducted by Center Manager, Regional Nurse, Family Worker or Teacher. Each volunteer will receive a volunteer packet which contains training information for Mandated Reporters.

Volunteers as The Third Person in the Classroom is classroom specific and will be conducted by the teacher. The ***Importance of Volunteers*** and the ***Education Volunteer Job Description*** are found in the **Education Binder**.

The training will be concluded with ***Miscellaneous Information*** and is conducted by Center Manager, Regional Nurse, Family Worker or Teacher. When training is held prior to October, address the celebration of October as Head Start Awareness Month. Your center may have special volunteer activities and recognition of volunteers in October.

Finally review in detail the ***Volunteer Time Sheet*** which will be used to compute agency inkind hours.

23 VOLUNTEER RECORD KEEPING

Tracking of volunteer clearance and training will be recorded and filed in keeping with confidentiality policies. At the time of Orientation/Enrollment family workers or other staff will gather the names of Head Start family members who indicate an interest in volunteering in the program. Those individuals will receive a packet of information to initiate the volunteer application process. The volunteer application packet will include a checklist of all requirements. Once a potential volunteer has received the required clearances, the clearance folder will be returned to the staff person. If no FBI clearance is needed, the staff person will complete the disclosure form with the potential volunteer and will sign as the witness. The staff person will give a copy of the TB Screening Questionnaire to the Regional Nurse for review and follow up. The Regional Nurse will indicate on the label of the Volunteer Packet, “OK” for no follow up needed or “follow up needed”. Follow up (TB Testing and results) will then be required for packet to be complete. Once all required documents are completed in their entirety, the staff person will forward them to the LCHS Family Engagement Team for initial review. The completed folder is then sent to LCHS Human Resources department for review of clearances and final approval.

For consecutive year applicants, a similar process is followed, with the elimination of clearances.

The same process will be followed by center managers for tracking of community volunteers. The center manager retains at the center a copy of each volunteer application.

An ongoing list of approved volunteers will be developed through the human resources department and will be shared with center staff. Only individuals with final approval will be scheduled as volunteers. Volunteer hours will be recorded as inkind accordingly.

Mandated Reporters

In accordance with PA law, all volunteers are Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse. This means that if you suspect child abuse, you are required by law to report it. The law requires you to make an oral report via the statewide toll-free telephone number Childline at 1-800-932-0313 OR an electronic report online at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis.

After making a report, the volunteer must notify the Center Manager. If the Center Manager is not available, the Teacher or Family Worker must be notified. Center staff will support volunteers in reporting to Childline and in completing the follow up report (CY47) and will notify the Central Office according to agency procedures. The staff will not share any identifying or confidential information with the volunteer. Consequently the oral report as well as the written report may have information missing. **A report must be made regardless of missing information.**

→ **If you witness child abuse taking place, call 911.**

→ **If any child is in imminent danger, call 911.**

Luzerne County 911 emergency services is able to accept texts ONLY in cases where someone is unable to make a phone call. Messages can be accepted from Verizon, AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile and OTT texting app from Comcast.

Additional information and training on Mandated Reporting is provided at Volunteer Training.

What is child abuse?

Child abuse, according to the Child Protective Services Law, means intentionally, knowingly or recklessly doing any of the following:

- Causing bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- Fabricating, feigning or intentionally exaggerating or inducing a medical symptom or disease which results in a potentially harmful medical evaluation or treatment to the child through any recent act.
- Causing or substantially contributing to serious mental injury to a child through any act or failure to act or a series of such acts or failures to act.
- Causing sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any act or failure to act.
- Creating a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- Creating a likelihood of sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- Causing serious physical neglect of a child.
- Causing the death of the child through any act or failure to act.

Child abuse also includes certain acts in which the act itself constitutes abuse without any resulting injury or condition. These recent acts include any of the following:

- Kicking, biting, throwing, burning, stabbing or cutting a child in a manner that endangers the child.
- Unreasonably restraining or confining a child, based on consideration of the method, location or the duration of the restraint or confinement.
- Forcefully shaking a child under one year of age.
- Forcefully slapping or otherwise striking a child under one year of age.
- Interfering with the breathing of a child.
- Causing a child to be present during the operation of a methamphetamine laboratory, provided that the violation is being investigated by law enforcement.
- Leaving a child unsupervised with an individual, other than the child's parent, who the parent knows or reasonably should have known was required to register as a Tier II or III sexual

offender or has been determined to be a sexually violent predator or sexually violent delinquent.

25 COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

The agency must perform outreach to encourage volunteers from the community to participate in Head Start. [1304.41(a) (3)]

Interested persons from the community may be considered as volunteers in our centers. The agency volunteer clearance and training procedures will be followed. Following a review of the application and the required reference checks, a decision will be made as to how to appropriately place the volunteer.

Upon approval from the Center Manager, the Family Worker will schedule a community volunteer in the area of interest where and when additional help is needed. Training will be provided using the Volunteer Training Checklist. Current parents will receive priority consideration when volunteer scheduling is being done.

25 AT-HOME VOLUNTEERS

If a Head Start child's Teacher or Family Educator provides the child's parents with written plans of guidance as to the types of activities that need to be done with the child at home in order to support the child's Head Start experience, these activities, may, when fairly valued, be counted as non-federal share. The "countability" of the parent's efforts hinge on doing things with the enrolled child that support the child's Head Start experience, that are articulated by the Teacher or Family Educator and that support the curriculum used by the program. General parenting duties do not constitute activities that can be counted as non-federal share, unless these activities meet the requirements noted above. The valuation of the parent's time should, unless a program can demonstrate otherwise, be valued at the rate of a Teacher's Assistant.

26 PARENT TRAINING PROCEDURES

Staff members are responsible for training parent volunteers in the appropriate service area. Volunteer training will include, but not be limited to, classroom volunteer training, training for assisting with the food service, for assisting on the bus, and as an assistant to the regional nurse on health-related projects.

Volunteer Training Day will be announced and invitations will go out to all parents regardless of whether they have expressed a prior interest in volunteering. Community volunteers may also be invited to attend the Volunteer Training Day.

In accordance with 1304.40(g)(1)&(2), training will also be provided for parent involvement in community advocacy, including:

Parent Committee - function, duties and responsibilities of members;
Policy Council - Composition and overview; Program Design and Management;
Health Advisory - Function, duties and responsibilities

26 PROCEDURES FOR CHILD CARE

Child Care will be provided for enrolled Head Start children at their own centers.

Classroom substitutes or classroom staff members provide childcare for Parent Committee meetings, Policy Council meetings, and Parent Workshops whenever possible. Child care is provided in two ways: a. Integrated into the Head Start Center classroom setting, where the maximum number of children should not exceed twenty (20) per classroom to meet Head Start standards. b. In Head Start Center classrooms during non instructional time, or child care areas for Parent Committee, Policy Council and workshops. Sometimes a child will need to remain in the care of center staff beyond the regular classroom hours, or may need to be dropped off prior to their start time.

For monthly Policy Council meetings younger siblings of enrolled HS children and Early Head Start children will be cared for at the Beekman Street Center. Requests for babysitting must be made in advance. Policy Council representatives are to contact the Family Services Program Assistant at the Central Office to arrange for childcare at the Beekman Street Center. Parents will provide a bagged lunch.

Travel time must be considered for all situations, including the regular monthly meeting. Policy Council meetings begin promptly at 9:45 and conclude at approximately 12:30. Head Start children may need to be dropped off prior to the start of their school day. Policy Council reps must communicate their needs to center staff and must be prompt in cancelling if it becomes necessary.

In addition to the monthly meetings, please be aware that Policy Council reps may request child care for Health and Transition Advisory Committee Meetings, Attendance, Safety, Property and Personnel Committee Meetings and Policy Council Parent Workshops.

GUIDELINES:

- 1.** Only currently enrolled children or other children of Head Start parents may receive child care services at the centers. Child care is provided to children preschool age and younger. Child care may be provided for school age children during Policy Council or parent meetings in the event that the meeting falls on a day when the child does not have school.
- 2.** Children who are ill should not be brought into the centers.
- 3.** Parents must provide diapers and other necessities for siblings who are not yet toilet trained.
- 4.** If a child drinks from a bottle, parents must provide the bottle and contents. Bottles must be dated and labeled with child's and parent's name and contents. Bottles must be stored in the designated refrigerator. Parents are responsible for feeding their child when they are in the center. Staff will assume this responsibility when parents are attending adult education classes, Policy Council meetings or Exploring Parenting Sessions. Staff must wear disposable gloves when handling, storing, and feeding breast milk.
- 5.** Parents who are volunteering at the center are expected to change their child's

diapers and clothes if necessary. Staff will assume this responsibility when parents are attending meetings outside the centers and during adult education classes, Policy Council meetings, or Parenting Sessions.

6. If a problem should arise during the time the child is in care, the parent, teacher, Family Worker or Family Educator will work together to resolve the problem.

7. Parents must arrange child care in advance and must call to cancel when child care will not be needed.

Non Classroom Activities: Child care is provided when parents attend meetings, parent activities, workshops, and training sessions. Parents must sign the child in and notify staff where they will be in the building. If a child cannot adjust to the child care setting, the parent will be asked to have the child join them in the meeting. There may be times when age restrictions for babysitting will be applied if those activities are held somewhere other than the Center. When parents will not be at the Center where the child is being cared for, emergency information and release forms must be provided.

Policy Council: Child care is provided for children Head Start age and younger. Care may be provided for school age children in the event the Policy Council meeting is held on a day when the child does not have school. (School age children are not to be brought to centers when they should be attending school). Parents are to provide emergency information and release forms to staff and provide a bag lunch for the child. Parents are urged to take the child's age into consideration and the length of time they will be away from the child prior to requesting babysitting for Policy Council.

Classroom: When a parent volunteers in a classroom, the younger child will accompany the parent and the parent will be responsible for the behavior, care and safety of that child. This is not considered child care. Parents are encouraged to use their best judgment as to the age of the child's ability to blend into classroom routine, permitting the parent to actively participate as a volunteer. Parents are expected to observe if they are not able to actively volunteer because of younger children.

Kitchen: No children are allowed in the kitchen area. If necessary, a non enrolled 3 year old may be placed in the classroom while their parent volunteers in the kitchen. The parent would be responsible for monitoring the child's behavior and needs hourly.

Bus: No child may accompany a parent when they volunteer on the bus, with the exception of the Head Start child receiving transportation services.

Study Trips: Parents and younger children may accompany a class on study trips in Head Start vehicles if space is available. First consideration is to be given to parents who have served as regular classroom volunteers and whose children are accustomed to being with the Head Start group. Parents will assume responsibility for the care and safety of younger children and are to use good judgment as to the age of the child and the child's ability to participate. Depending on the circumstances, a parent providing their own transportation may bring along a younger child, if capacity at the field trip location is not limited. Prior approval must be obtained from Center Manager.

Health Services: During health screenings at the Centers, non-enrolled three year olds may be placed in the classroom, if necessary, when parents volunteer. The parent would be responsible for monitoring the child's behavior and needs hourly. In the event of medical or dental trips arranged by Head Start with transportation being provided, younger siblings may accompany the parent on the Head Start vehicle. Arrangements must be made ahead of time and car seats used when required.