



Program  
Service  
Plans  
2017-2018

## Program Service Plans Overview

The Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start program has developed this set of work plans to outline the on-going work for the managers and direct service staff. This program operates center-based services for Early Head Start and Preschool/Head Start. There are 48 children served in the Early Head Start center based program in 6 classroom settings. The preschool Head Start program serves 105 children in 8 multi-aged classrooms. In addition, the Carroll County Early Head Start program also operates a Home-Based program option. There are 32 children and families served in the Home Based option. The Early Head Start program also offers services to pregnant women and their expectant families.

The Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start program has seven managers that oversee the operations of the program. Jonica Ray serves as the Head Start Director and supervises Leah Spencer, HS/EHS Coordinator who monitors the managers of the following areas: Child Health and Safety, Education and Early Childhood Development, Child Nutrition, Mental Health, Family Partnerships, Community Partnerships, Disability Services, ERSEA, Transportation Services, and Services to Pregnant Women.

Specific managers are as follows:

- Leah Spencer - Program Coordinator
- Robin Kates – Education Manager
- Elizabeth Brown – Mental Health Manager/ Disability Services Manager
- Britny Brewer - Child Health and Safety Manager, Nutrition Manager, Services to Pregnant Women Manager
- Kim Horine – Transportation Manager
- Debbie Roth- Parent, Family and Community Engagement Manager
- Jennifer Spillman – Data Manager and ERSEA Co-manager
- Kelly Warren- Environments Manager
- Jennifer Winkle – ERSEA Manager and Office Manger
- Sandra Byrd- Fiscal Officer

The following pages outline the service plans for the Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start program.

## **Child Health**

Performance Standard 1302.42  
Mandated regulations including federal & state;  
Child Care Regulations

### **Objective:**

- Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start will assist all families to access ongoing prevention and intervention health services.

### **Justification:**

Data and experience confirm that health is the foundation of educational success. Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start's commitment to wellness embraces a comprehensive vision of health for children, families and staff that encompass medical, dental, nutritional, and mental health.

### **Approach:**

In collaboration with families and in the context of diverse cultures, the Health Service Area includes activities related to the determination of child health status; linkages to accessible, continuous sources of care; interventions to address identified and suspected health concerns; practices that support safety and healthy life-long well-being; and approaches that address the interrelated areas of nutritional as well as mental wellness. Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start supports comprehensive health services for all children, including those with special needs.

### **Medical Home:**

Head Start Family Service Workers and Early Head Start Family Service workers will, no later than 30 days from entry, will begin the process of assisting families to identify each child's ongoing source of health care, known as a medical home. It is anticipated all families will have a medical home by program year's end.

### **Well care status and ongoing care:**

Program staff (Head Start Family Service Workers and Early Head Start Family Service Workers) will meet with each family to determine if child is up-to-date on the Kentucky EPSDT schedule of care, which includes sensory screenings and Kentucky immunization mandates, and work to secure documentation of each child's most recent, valid, EPSDT check-up and immunization records.

Carroll County HS/EHS will determine child's healthcare status within 90 calendar days after the child first attends the program verifying date of one of the following: dental exam, physical exam/well child check, and/or immunization record.

Carroll County HS/EHS will determine child's vision and hearing within 45

days of the child attending the program.

In addition, each child's oral health status will be discussed, with either a record of child's current dental exam secured, or a dental exam scheduled, in partnership with each child's family, no later than 30 days of entry for Carroll County Head Start preschool children, and in accordance with Kentucky EPSDT guidelines for their EHS children.

Carroll County HS/EHS will work in collaboration with each family and their medical or other professional providers to support and assist in obtaining needed, ongoing well care as well as addressing any suspected or identified health concerns that occur throughout the program year. Appropriate follow-up plans and individual health care plans will be developed and implemented as needed, assisting families to secure equipment or materials and medication as appropriate.

**Community Health Partners:**

Carroll County HS/EHS will establish ongoing relationships with community health agencies and resources, such as Carroll County Health Department, WIC office, Medicaid and KCHIP Offices, Carroll County Family Resource Center, Carroll County Extension Office, and a local dental office which will provide ongoing community support for the program's families.

**Family Health:**

Carroll County HS/EHS will utilize community agencies and local partnerships to link families to sources of ongoing health care for both children and their parents.

**Payment Sources:**

Recognizing that the Head Start dollar is the dollar of last resort, Carroll County HS/EHS will actively seek other sources of payment for needed health (medical, mental, dental, and nutritional) services and care. Such sources will include assisting with enrollment in Kentucky Medicaid as well as KCHIP and seeking additional care resources for those who may not qualify for state services. The Carroll County Family Resource Center will also provide assistance when needed.

## **Education and Early Childhood Development**

Performance Standard 1304.21

Mandated regulations including federal & state;  
Child Care Regulations

### **Objective:**

- To provide an approach for all children (birth through age five) with opportunities and experiences designed to enhance growth and development in all developmental domains.
- To establish a trusting and secure environment for all children that is appropriate for individual rates of growth and development.
- To offer experiences that meet the social/emotional, physical, health, and academic needs of each child in an inclusive program.
- To work in partnership with parents/guardians and the community to provide developmentally appropriate learning environments, materials, and services to encourage habits that will lead to school readiness and the development of a life-long focus on learning.
- To provide opportunities to address the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and Kentucky Early Childhood Standards in each preschool classroom.

### **Justification:**

There is a great body of research-based evidence that supports quality interactions and environments for children to support healthy brain development and highlights the windows of opportunity for learning in the early years. Research also suggests that the earlier the family is involved with the education of their child the more successful children and families will become. It is our goal to expose children to a variety of experiences in an effort to develop opportunities for children to be actively involved in learning, acquire habits for increased attention and engagement, focus on early literacy skills, see modeled writing for a variety of purposes, and exposure to a language rich environment. These experiences and skill outcomes are indicators that lead to future school success.

### **Approach:**

In order to help children birth to five gain the social competence, skills and confidence necessary to be prepared to succeed, not only within their present environment, but also with later responsibilities in school and life, we will provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum, quality instructional practices, and authentic assessment that recognize children have individual rates of development as well as individual interests, temperaments, languages, cultural backgrounds, and learning styles.

### **Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment:**

The Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start program has chosen the Frog Street Press, Inc. curriculum as its base for the infant/toddler and preschool center-based programs and the infant/toddler home-based program. The

curriculum was chosen based on the fact that is evidence-based and has research to support its methods. Each curriculum is a comprehensive, integrated, bilingual early learning program designed to insure success for today's zero to five learners through the latest research and interactive learning philosophies.

The Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start program has chosen to use the High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR Advantage) as both Early Head Start and Head Start ongoing assessment tool. The Early Head Start program and Head Start program will use the Brigance Screener as the developmental screening tool.

All staff members participate in training to focus on the methods of instruction and how to properly implement the curriculum to ensure fidelity. New teachers are provided with the necessary trainings to use all curriculum and assessment pieces. In addition, they are also trained in the developmental screening process and also how to accurately use the companion assessment system to assess and document the child's growth and development to ensure they have learned skills and concepts necessary to be successful. The following are practices that all teachers will do to ensure the curriculum is implemented appropriately within the classrooms:

- The *Frog Street, Inc.* format provides the routines for the daily schedule. Each classroom follows a schedule that is understood and shown to students using pictures and words in the classroom. This consistent routine develops a secure feeling for all children. Transitions are well planned by the teacher to allow for smooth movement between each part of the day. Teachers use a variety of methods to cue students that one activity is ending and another beginning. These signals may be visual or oral. Sometimes they are individualized for particular students, who have difficulty transitioning.
- Classroom instruction is based on developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) which involves developing skills through play, exploration, self-expression and an appropriate balance of both teacher and child directed lessons. Individual and small group activities are planned daily along with opportunities for large group as appropriate. All teachers follow the curriculum guide book for instructional plans. Teachers submit plans for individualization and accommodations for children needing interventions in order to gain from each activity or routine. The individual plans for each child ensure that each child has equal opportunity and support to learn the specific skills necessary for school readiness and future success. The individualized plans are submitted to the education manager each week.
- Safety and supervision is a priority for Carroll County's Head Start/Early Head Start program. In order to ensure that teaching staff supervise children by sight and sound the classroom arrangement will be monitored. This will include ensuring that all shelving is low; tops of shelves should be free of tall items to allow visibility of students throughout the room. Active supervision of children by staff will be observed and monitored in order to ensure proper supervision during all routines and areas.

- All classrooms plan for a regular time either inside or outside to allow children to work on motor skills. Toys and materials, appropriate for the age group, are available and should be used regularly. In addition to the outside time, teachers are encouraged to take their class on weekly nature walks for exercise and exposure to outdoors including the use of the STEM garden. Children also develop movement and gross motor skills while participating in music and movement activities using the Minds in Motion circuits.
- All teaching staff members take daily anecdotal notes to identify how children are progressing toward meeting the assessment goals. Assessment data is analyzed and discussed with parents three times yearly. Teacher assessments include: daily observational notes, skill check lists, individualized assessment on all developmental domains, and tracking information on the assessment to look at individual child progress. Program assessment data is also collected and analyzed by school readiness team to determine program changes and goals for next year.
- Language development is given high priority in the Carroll County program. This is a key to developing understanding for children in all areas. Our program emphasizes the importance for all adults to provide modeling of appropriate language and give support to each child to increase vocabulary on a daily basis. Language development is stressed in every activity (e.g., music, art, writing, literacy, math...) in Head Start/Early Head Start. Children are given opportunities on a daily basis to develop art, music, movement, and drama appreciation.
- Every child is exposed to writing that is modeled and discussed. They are then given multiple opportunities to promote literacy through opportunities that build and enhance pre-writing skills. Each center has some form of reading and writing opportunities available.
- Teachers have a variety of materials in their classrooms. Each classroom is organized into well-defined areas, consisting of a dramatic play area, block area, manipulative area, art area, a reading and writing area, and a water/sand/sensory table. Each area encourages a variety of activities due to stimulating materials placed there. The materials reflect the children's interests as well as their developmental levels and can be used in a variety of ways. Materials are located on shelves and are clearly labeled, so the children can become independent workers.
- Math concepts and vocabulary are taught through hands-on, active learning games designed to focus on number concepts, patterns, graphing, and geometrical understanding.
- The use of learning centers ensures children's free choice, with a focus on learning through play. The adults in all classrooms dedicate time interacting with students to develop language, develop social skills, and to help with problem solving and decision-making.
- The environment in each classroom provides security, structure, open spaces, and small areas to provide students with opportunities to develop independence and social interaction. Teachers model appropriate behaviors and use positive guidance strategies for challenging behaviors using the Conscious Discipline component of the Frog Street Press, Inc.

curriculum. Consistent guidance is provided to enable students to become self-regulated, develop positive self-esteem and form a sense of self-efficacy.

- The education manager monitors the education component throughout the year through regular classroom observations using the CLASS tool and weekly review of individualized lesson plans. Staff training is developed based on the self-assessment, outcomes data, and needs of the teachers, to better implement the curriculum, achieve program goals, and meet Head Start/Early Head Start performance standards.
- The Coordinator monitors the home-based Early Head Start program to ensure regular weekly visits are offered and that family input is incorporated into the lessons planned.

Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start highlights the following objectives to ensure a socially acceptable environment is in place:

**To ensure all children gain social competence, skills, and confidence:**

The Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start Program strives to meet the developmental needs of the whole child and their families. This process starts at enrollment when the staff begins to identify the developmental needs and family structure of each child. The family service workers, who enroll new children, begin gathering information by talking with parents. Information continues to be gathered as relationships are established by the teachers during initial home visits and subsequent staff/parent contact. For Spanish speaking families, the bilingual instructional assistant is available to facilitate.

When Spanish speaking children are enrolled in the program, their primary language is fostered, while the development of English is supported. The bilingual assistant helps to provide security for each child while helping them to transition to the school environment. This includes written language, messages to families, conversation in the child's native language, and materials representative of the child's home and culture. The Head Start/Early Head Start program also offers:

- A safe and secure learning environment for all children to develop secure external relationships with others.
- A diverse and supportive environment provides opportunity for each child.
- The evidence based curriculum addresses the growth and development of all children in all domains.
- For the Early Head Start program, an emphasis will be placed on building relationships and establishing secure environments that will build a solid social/emotional foundation which allows children to grow and learn.
- Within the preschool program, the Frog Street Press, Inc. curriculum is aligned to the Head Start Early Learning Framework and the Kentucky Early Learning Standards to ensure desired outcomes of school readiness

goals and program goals. This will include, but is not limited to the following areas: literacy/ language/ science/math (Frog Street Press, Inc.), social skills (Conscious Discipline, Frog Street component) and motor development (Minds in Motion and fine and gross motor activities provided through the Frog Street curriculum for gross/fine motor routines). Teachers plan weekly to focus on individual student needs while implementing established objectives and activities using the Frog Street, Inc. to focus the learning.

- Individualization is provided for each child on a daily basis and is noted in teacher lesson plans. Goals and objectives for learning will be individualized and may be based on the child's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), the child's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or the needs of each child as the teacher observes during their play and other activities, planned and unplanned.

**To ensure that all environments address the needs of children with disabilities and cultural needs:**

A variety of strategies are used to ensure that all classrooms and socialization environments are inclusive of all children including those with disabilities and those with diverse cultural backgrounds. The following are a few of the techniques teachers utilize to ensure diversity and inclusion:

- Materials are used that reflect diversity, such as disabilities, and family cultures. These materials include; books, posters, puzzles and toys that are multi-cultural and reflect no gender bias.
- Classrooms are modified when necessary to allow all children, including those with special needs, the full range of activities.
- Children with special needs are included in the Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms and will receive instruction and necessary services within that environment.
- Infants and toddlers with disabilities will have an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), established with the First Steps program. Teachers will be a part of that process as much as possible. Objectives from the IFSP's will be incorporated into the daily routines and lesson plans completed by teachers and/or home visitors.
- Individual Education Plans (IEP) may be developed after evaluation has been done to determine a disability. With parent assistance specific learning goals in areas of need are developed. Intervention strategies are then provided by appropriate personnel that are responsible for planning, preparing, and delivering, the services that best allow students to reach their individual goals.

**To establish a balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated activity:**

Utilizing the Frog Street Inc. curriculum and COR Advantage (Child Observation Record) ongoing assessment for the infant/toddler and preschool center-based programs, teachers will develop daily schedules that will offer age and developmentally appropriate balance of activities. This will take into account the daily routines that all children must participate in throughout the day as well as individual, small and large group activities as appropriate.

The learning environments will be arranged to provide children with hands-on activities and opportunities for free choice. These activity areas and choices will include but are not limited to, dramatic play, fine motor play, block play, creative play, music and movement, as well as providing materials for reading, nature, science and discovery.

In addition to the free choice time, the daily routines will also provide opportunities for children to be engaged in a balance of teacher-directed activities and child-directed activities. These activities are facilitated by the teacher according to the curriculum guide and plan and are based on the individual child's abilities, goals/outcomes, needs, and interests. While children are actively involved in exploring and using materials, making choices and solving problems, the teacher is scaffolding the learning experience to ensure all children are progressing toward meeting the developmental milestones, the Head Start Early Learning Framework and the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards.

Teachers and home visitors will be trained in health and safety procedures and will incorporate universal precautions in their daily operations. Children will be active participants in proper hand-washing, toileting/diapering, mealtimes and preventive dental care. In addition to the daily routines, toileting is another opportunity for children to develop independent skills and allow all staff members to work with parents and the child as they work to ensure each child is supported in the process. The local health department, and extension service, (two community partners), provide support throughout the year on a variety of health topics for the children, such as; hand washing, tooth brushing, and nutrition.

**To encourage parents to be active partners:**

- Teachers ask parents to share observations about their child, so that the child's learning experiences meet his or her individual needs and the parent participates as their child's first teacher.
- Parents participate in home visits, parent teacher conferences, and regular communication with the teachers. They are encouraged to volunteer in classrooms through an open-door policy.
- Parents serve on the Parent Committee and Policy Council, providing advisement of program structure and goals. The parent committee assists

in planning yearly activities to meet curriculum needs of students in the way of special programs, materials, after school offerings as well as parent trainings. This committee gives every parent an opportunity to participate in developing school educational opportunities.

- Parents participate in the program self-assessment process.
- Parents are oriented to child development skills through teacher newsletters, school to home connective activities, home visits, and on-going parent trainings. The Family Reports are aligned with the program assessment piece, which follows the Kentucky Preschool Standards as well as the Head Start Child Early Learning Framework. This integration helps parents and teachers to focus on essential learning for all children.
- The parents are encouraged to participate in assisting their child with school readiness skills. The parent is encouraged to read to their child on a nightly basis and then record the time spent on a reading log that is returned to school. This process ensures every child is getting exposure to literature at home and that life-long reading habits are developed, while encouraging parents to become actively involved with their child's learning. Research shows the single best indicator for language development and future reading success is early reading exposure.
- The community ensures all Head Start/Early Head Start students are exposed to good reading material by supporting each child with receiving books mailed to their home through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.

## **Child Safety**

Performance Standard 1302.47  
Mandated regulations including federal & state;  
Child Care Regulations

### **Objective:**

- To develop and implement procedures and best practices to promote the health and safety of children, staff and families.

### **Justification:**

We value the healthy development of each child and strive to provide an environment that follows appropriate safety precautions; to prevent injury, to respond to injury, to respond to emergencies, and to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

### **Approach:**

The Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start staff will follow the Health Emergency procedure and Emergency Action Plans for any medical emergency. The Dental Emergency Procedure will be followed in case of a dental emergency. All staff have access to these procedures and will be familiar with these procedures.

Emergency telephone numbers will be posted in each classroom. Up-to-date family contact information will be kept in classroom, office, and on buses. Emergency evacuation routes will be posted in each classroom.

In case of suspected child abuse or neglect, the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Procedure would be followed. Staff is trained on this procedure.

### **Conditions of Short-Term Exclusion and Admittance**

The Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start program will temporarily exclude a child with a short-term injury or an acute or short-term illness only when that child poses a significant risk to the health or safety of a child or anyone in contact with the child. This will be done only on a temporary basis and only under the direction of the Head Start/Early Head Start Coordinator or Nurse.

Program participation will not be excluded over the long term solely on the basis of health care needs or medication requirements unless keeping the child poses a significant risk, which cannot be reduced to an acceptable level. All attempts shall be made to work with the child and the family on reducing the significant risk.

Parents must provide information about any health or safety needs of the child that the program may be required to address. This information will be shared with the appropriate staff on an "as needed" basis regarding accommodations and shall be kept in strict confidentiality.

## **Medication Administration**

All Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start staff will follow the written procedure for the administration, handling, and storage of medication. Relevant staff are trained on the procedures yearly as a part of health and safety practices.

## **Injury Prevention**

All staff with regular child contact will be trained on CPR and First Aid. They will demonstrate an ability to perform safety practices. A safety awareness program will be provided for parents and children.

Well supplied first aid kits shall be maintained in each classroom and on each bus. However, they will be kept out of the reach of children. First aid kits will be restocked after each use and regular monitoring will be done to ensure items are on hand as needed.

## **Hygiene**

All staff and volunteers will be trained and shall follow the Hygiene procedure, which details the following information:

- 1.) When staff, volunteers, and children will wash their hands.
- 2.) When staff must use nonporous gloves.
- 3.) Disinfecting areas, which have been contaminated with spills or bodily fluids.
- 4.) Diapering procedures.
- 5.) Disinfecting bathroom areas.

The above procedures shall be posted in each classroom.

A checklist for classroom cleaning is maintained by custodial staff and teaching staff to document cleaning of materials in each classroom to ensure healthy classroom materials and environment.

## **Child Nutrition**

### Performance Standard 1302.44

#### **Objective:**

- To offer all children appropriate meals and snacks
- To promote good nutrition habits by providing culturally and developmentally appropriate meals and snacks in a relaxed unhurried atmosphere.
- To meet nutritional needs by: reviewing-the nutritional history and needs of each child and family, by providing parent training in good nutrition.

#### **Justification:**

While obtaining adequate nutrition may be a challenge for many Head Start/Early Head Start families, good nutrition is a necessary prerequisite for children to learn, grow, and thrive. By exposing children to a wide variety of low fat, low sugar, nutritious food and snacks, choosing nutritious foods can become part of a healthy lifestyle that begins in youth and lasts a lifetime. Proper nutrition is very important for young children. Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start provides a quality, effective, nutrition program for the children and families it serves.

#### **Approach:**

Meal times and food are a part of the total Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start education program. The nutritional goal of the program is to promote the optimal nutritional status of all the children as determined by the recommended dietary allowances. Every child receives meals and snacks, which provides the specified nutritional needs to ensure that the child's daily required nutritional needs are met. Meals served include food from each of the food groups. All foods served conform to minimum standards for meal patterns recommended by USDA. Meal and snack periods are scheduled appropriately for individual children. Infants and toddlers are fed on-demand. Information about nutrition activities are shared regularly with parents and menus are posted.

Children and staff, including volunteers, eat together family style, sharing the same menu to the extent possible and socializing in a relaxed atmosphere. Infants and toddlers who are not sitting alone are held while feeding. The schedule is designed to allow feeding on demand for younger children and all children have sufficient time within the schedule for the children to eat. Chairs and tables are of suitable size for the development level of the children. Children with disabilities are provided adaptive techniques and utensils, if necessary. Medically based diets or other dietary requirements are accommodated. Parents of infants will be encouraged to breastfeed their children. Support for those families who

choose to breastfeed will be given. A breastfeeding area that provides privacy will be available to any breastfeeding mothers and breast milk will be stored and handled properly. Those staff members, who choose not to or cannot eat the same foods with the children, sit with the children during mealtime and socialize with them. They do not eat other foods in front of the children.

Meal times and food are an integral part of the education program. Food is not used as a punishment or reward. Children are encouraged but not forced to eat or taste new foods. Foods and menus reflect ethnic and cultural composition of the population served. All foods served are high in nutrients, low in sugar, salt, and fat. Foods served are appropriate to developmental levels, and potential choking hazards are avoided.

The staff promotes effective dental hygiene by having the children brush their teeth following breakfast or lunch. Children also wash their hands before eating, developing independent skills.

The Policy Council and Health Advisory Committee review and make recommendations for the nutrition services provided.

Parents are informed of the benefits of the food assistance program. Community agencies are enlisted to assist eligible families to participate in food assistance programs. Pregnant women who are enrolled in the Early Head Start program will be offered nutritional assistance and counseling as needed.

The Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start Program participates in the USDA Child Food Service Program. The following USDA guidelines are maintained:

- Establishment and maintenance of nutritional services budget.
- Health of food handlers.
- Directions of program by qualified person.
- Direction of preparation, sanitation, storage, and serving food.

All applicable local, State, and Federal sanitation laws and regulations for food service operations will be in compliance. The Carroll County Board of Education Food Service Director directs the nutrition services with assistance from the Head Start/Early Head Start Nutrition Coordinator and a Clinical Nutritionist. All nutrition services staff receives pre-service and in-service training as necessary to demonstrate and maintain proficiency in menu planning, food purchasing, food preparation and storage, and sanitation and personal hygiene.

In addition to the services provided for children, the Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start program also offers parent training in nutritional education. Some of the topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The principles of nutrition and their application to child development and family health.
- Budgeting for meals.
- Proper selection and preparation of food.
- The importance of dining together as a family.

Providing the appropriate social and emotional environment that supports and promotes the development of sound food habits.

Staff members also follow program procedures for the safety and handling of food. The food service staff receives annual training in the following: food storage, sanitation, personal hygiene, safety, first aid, and food preparation. Head Start/Early Head Start classroom personnel receive training from the food service program on health and safety regulations, concerning the proper handling of foods.

## **Mental Health**

### Performance Standard 1304.45

#### **Objective:**

- To work with parents to obtain information concerning each child's mental wellness
- To involve parents in the implementation of mental wellness services
- To support parents and staff in their efforts to provide warm, nurturing environments and relationships
- To utilize the expertise and services of mental health professionals in the community in order to support efforts in the program and in the home for the provision of appropriate mental health services.

#### **Justification:**

Head Start/Early Head Start has long recognized the critical importance of strengthening the bond between parent and child in order to make a lasting impact on the lives of children. Strengthening families, enhancing the role of parents, and providing a warm, supportive, caring environment in the classroom and in the home is important for each child's development.

#### **Approach:**

To facilitate secure relationships and attachments to adult caregivers, parents are encouraged to spend time in the children's classroom, to reassure the child about his or her parent's return, and for older children to discuss school often. Parents may also experience anxiety over separation from their children. All staff members work to assist parents with such separation anxiety by validating their feelings and encouraging parental participation in the program.

Continuity of care is also a critical factor in establishing a socially/emotionally healthy environment. Children are assigned primary caregivers and establish a system for continuity among caregivers within the program.

All Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms will be observed as needed by the Mental Health Consultant to provide assistance and support to classroom staff in creating environments, which are conducive to the mental health of all children. The Mental Health Consultant will work collaboratively with the guidance counselors of the local schools where siblings are involved to assist teachers, children, or parents to deal with mental wellness issues. This also includes the referral process to additional mental health services.

Once school begins, during screening, and throughout the school year, staff members will observe children closely and maintain records concerning the observations. The social-emotional screening tool used is Brigance. Any child that experiences emotional or social issues is identified and given extra attention in the classroom to accommodate the need. Staff also implements the Conscious Discipline curriculum to promote positive mental health and well-being. Staff shares this information regularly with families through conferences,

notes, home visits, and telephone calls. In this manner, parents are alerted immediately so that they can act as a resource and be involved from the very beginning in determining if intervention is necessary.

With parents informed, the Mental Health Consultant will observe the child. After the observation the Mental Health Consultant will meet with the teacher, parent, FSW and other necessary personnel to discuss issues. Positive behavior strategies will be developed to assist the child, staff, and family as needed. A follow-up meeting will be planned to determine if the positive behavior strategies are effective in addressing the behavior. As needed, meetings will take place with the advocates and teachers who will also contact the parents to discuss the child and the actions taken. The Mental Health Consultant will then observe the child again, with parents' consent, and refer the child for further outside evaluation and follow up treatment if necessary.

If the child does not respond to the positive behavior strategies that are in place and a referral is necessary the teacher will go through the ARC process to refer the child. The ARC will identify if further evaluation is necessary to identify a specific special need the child has that is causing the behavioral issues. The parent will then be asked for permission to evaluate the child. After the evaluation the ARC will meet again to discuss the findings. If evaluation has determined the child has a special need according to the KY eligibility guidelines an IEP (individual education plan) will be developed to provide goals to meet the child's special needs with the parent's permission. The child will then receive services in the least restrictive environment.

Mental wellness training is provided to staff and parents through out the year to assist parents in identifying and responding to their children's social and emotional needs and to help staff create environments conducive to the mental wellness of the entire group. Material for these trainings will be obtained from Conscious Discipline and parents will be trained at monthly Parent Group meetings.

Our program will utilize the services of the NorthKey as a resource to assist children and families experiencing extreme social emotional issues.

**Family Partnership Services**  
Performance Standard 1302.52

**Objective:**

- To offer parents opportunities and support for growth, so that they can identify their own strengths, needs, and interests, and find their own solutions.
- To advocate for communities that are supportive of children and families of all cultures.
- To build strong trusting, collaborative relationships between parents and staff.
- To provide quality services to pregnant women and their families

**Justification:**

By working in partnership that is driven by parent's identification of their family's strengths and needs, parents and staff determine how the program can support families in pursuing their goals.

**Approach:**

**Family Goal Setting**

The family service workers will initiate, within 90 days of initial entry, a collaborative partnership with all of the families to determine family goals, strengths, services and other support systems needed by the families. Considerations will be made for each family's readiness and willingness to participate in the process.

Parents will be offered the opportunity to develop and implement an individualized Family Partnership Agreement that describes family goals, responsibilities, timetables, and strategies for achieving these goals. Documentation will be kept on achieving these goals. The family service workers will do periodic follow-ups with the parents on the progress of the family's goals. Ongoing communication such as home visits, phone calls, and conferences will be scheduled with the family service workers to assist families with goal setting and reaching goals.

Every effort will be made to work with other service providers and ensure that no duplications or conflicts exist with preexisting family plans. Community Based Services, First Steps, and any other agency which assists families in writing plans will be contacted to determine which families they serve and to ensure that the Head Start/Early Head Start Family Partnership Agreement supports the accomplishment of goals in any pre-existing plans.

Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start will host a number of events throughout the year for interaction with parents including: picnics, home visits, parent-teacher conferences, parent education sessions, etc. All interactions with parents will be respectful of that family's specific cultural and ethnic background.

### **Assessing Community Services and Resources:**

The family service workers will utilize the PFCE assessment and needs assessment tool to work with the Head Start/Early Head Start Parents to identify and continually access, directly or through referrals, services or resources in the community, which would benefit the Head Start/Early Head Start families including:

Emergency or crisis assistance with food, housing, clothing, and transportation.

Education and other appropriate interventions, including opportunities for parents to participate in counseling or to receive information on mental health issues that place families at risk i.e. substance abuse, child abuse and neglect, and domestic violence.

Opportunities for continuing education and employment

Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start will work collaboratively with the service providers to ensure that services are provided in a timely and efficient manner. Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start will make available to all Head Start/Early Head Start families the Community Resource Booklet.

The family service workers will do follow-ups with the Head Start/Early Head Start families to determine if the quality of services provided to the families is adequate and if any further assistance is needed.

Family services staff will support and assist families to keep their children's well care current, and maintain documentation of current health services, such as well child exams and immunizations, dental exams and treatments, and any needed follow-up care.

### **Parent Involvement:**

Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start will provide parent/family participation in the program planning, decision-making, and other program activities. Parents will be encouraged, but not mandated, to participate in other ways, including but not limited to the following:

- Complete a survey of their interests and needs.
- Two home visits per year for parents by assigned teachers.
- Two parent-teacher conferences per year.
- Parent Education Sessions (as determined by the needs/interests of the parents) including parenting sessions, medical, dental, nutrition, and mental health education sessions, community resources, child development.
- Volunteer opportunities in the classroom and at home.
- Paid substitute (See Policy)
- Member of the Policy Council
- Member of the Parent Committee or the Health Advisory Committee.
- Parent Activity Sessions offered by community partners
- Participate in incentive programs such as "Proud Parent Incentive Program".
- Family Partnership Agreements

- Observe in the classroom during program operation hours.
- Participate in literacy or Adult Education Classes.
- Other community service providers will be encouraged to assist in the planning and implementation of parent sessions.
- Parent Involvement in Health, Nutrition, and Mental Health Education

The medical and dental health program will work with parents in the following ways:

- Assist parents in understanding how to enroll and participate in a system of ongoing family health care.
- Encourage parents to become active partners in their children's medical and dental health care process and to accompany their child medical and dental examinations and appointments.
- Provide parents with the opportunity to learn the principles of preventive medical and dental health, emergency first aid, occupational and environmental hazards, and safety practices, maternal health, prevention of Sudden Infant Syndrome, and specific information on the health needs of their own children.

In addition to the above mentioned ways to involve families, the mental health education program will provide the following:

- A variety of group opportunities for parents and program staff to identify and discuss issues related to children's mental health.
- Individual opportunities to discuss mental health issues related to their child and family with program staff and the mental health consultant on an as needed basis.
- The active involvement of parents in planning and implementing any mental health interventions for their children.
- Individual and family counseling will be provided to children and families on an as needed basis through referral.

#### **Parent Involvement in Community Advocacy:**

Parents will be provided information about the available community resources and will be provided opportunities to be involved in community services, events, etc. The Community Resource Booklet will be given to each family enrolled in Head Start/Early Head Start. Parents are encouraged to participate on community committees, etc. that they have expressed an interest in.

#### **Parent Involvement in Transition Activities:**

Parents will be encouraged and assisted in becoming their child's advocate as they transition into and out of the Head Start/Early Head Start Program.

Children transitioning into Head Start/Early Head Start from the First Steps Early Intervention Program are provided a transition meeting with the child's parents, First Steps Service Provider, and Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start personnel. This meeting gives the parents an opportunity to learn more about the program and staff and to also ask

specific questions concerning their child's new program.

An initial home visit is conducted for all preschool children at the beginning of the school year. This provides an opportunity for the parents and child to meet the teacher prior to the beginning of school. Transitioning to the preschool program involves several steps including:

- Parent education sessions
- Visits to the Primary School for both parents and children.
- Joint special programs for Preschool and Primary children and parents held at the Primary School.
- Joint meetings of Preschool and Kindergarten teachers and preschool parents to discuss the individual progress of children.
- Joint professional development opportunities for Preschool and Kindergarten teachers.

### **Parent Involvement in Home Visits**

#### *Center-Based Program Option*

At the beginning of and at the end of the school year, teaching staff will conduct a home visit. The teacher will schedule each home visit at a time, which is conducive to the parent's schedule. These visits will be conducted in the home unless the parents ask that the visits be conducted somewhere other than the home or the staff feel the home is an unsafe environment. In either of these situations, the visit can be conducted at Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start or some other mutually convenient location. These home visits occur to provide parents and teachers a chance to talk about individual children's interests and needs, as well as to discuss their growth and progress. Staff are also able to offer additional materials and resources to families as necessary.

#### *Home-Based Program Option*

In addition to their center-based services, Carroll County Early Head Start program also offers the Home-Based option for families who do not have a need for the center-based program. In this option, parents are an integral part of the home visit as the home visitor must meet with the parent/guardian of that child on a weekly basis. The home visitors are assigned a case-load of no more than 12 families and they make regular weekly visits with families and children. Home Visitors also plan a minimum of two socialization opportunities each month for the families and children to come together.

## **Parent Family Engagement**

Performance Standard 1301.4, 1302.34, 1302.16, 1302.34, 1302.50-52

### **Objective:**

- To use a parent and family focused approach in all systems and program services, promoting family well-being and children's learning and development
- To offer parents opportunities, support, and resources that identifies needs, interests, strengths, goals and services
- To advocate for communities that are supportive of children and families of all cultures.
- To build strong, trusting, collaborative relationships between parents and staff.
- To provide quality services to pregnant women, children, and families

### **Justification:**

By using a family focused approach in all systems and services, staff and families will strive to promote growth in families and children. Through the family partnership/family needs assessment, students' curriculum and assessment, educational and engagement opportunities, and other program activities, parents and staff will build relationships that support family well-being and promote children's learning and development.

### **Approach:**

#### **1301.4 & 1302.51 Parent committees and Parent Activities to Promote Child Learning and Development**

CCCCDC establishes a parent group by September of the current school year. All enrolled students' parents/guardians are notified of the parent group, as well as other leadership and engagement opportunities including Health Advisory Committee, School Readiness Team, and the Policy Council, upon enrollment via an informational sign-up form. Family Services Workers also discuss these opportunities with parents/guardian at the beginning of the program year or at children's enrollment during events such as meet and greet, center visits, home visits, etc.

Parents will have the opportunity to learn about and give feedback on the program's education curriculum and assessment via parent group, School Readiness Team meetings, and Policy Council meetings. Teaching staff also

discuss curriculum and assessment with parents during home visits and parent teacher conferences.

The Parent Group will give parents the opportunity to learn about and participate in a research-based parenting curriculum, Frog Street Press, which is a parent component of CCCDC's parenting curriculum. Conscious Discipline is also embedded in the curriculum and may be utilized during parent groups.

In addition, the Parent Group will:

- (1) Advise staff in developing and implementing local program policies, activities, and services to ensure they meet the needs of children and families;
- (2) Have a process for communication with the policy council; and
- (3) Within the guidelines established by the governing body and policy council, participate in the recruitment and screening of Early Head Start and Head Start employees.

CCCDC will offer family engagement events that encourage parent-child relationships and child development including language, dual language, and literacy. Dual language learners and bi-literacy will be supported.

### **1302.34 & 1302.50 Parent/Family Engagement in Education and Child Development Services**

CCCDC values parents/guardians as their children's first, primary, and lifelong educators. CCCDC designs and implements program services to uphold this philosophy.

CCCDC implements various family engagement strategies by providing the following services and opportunities:

- CCCDC is open to parents during program hours.
- Regular communication occurs between teaching staff and families regarding child's routines, activities and behaviors.
- Family Partnership/Needs Assessment, which includes a survey to capture family's needs and interests
- Minimum of two home visits per year by teaching staff.
- Minimum of two parent-teacher conferences per year.
- Teaching staff and/or program staff inform parents about the purposes and results of developmental screenings, assessments, and child progress via the home visits and parent teacher conferences.
- Volunteer and/or observation opportunities in the classroom, at events, and during Home Base Socializations.
- Paid substitute (See Policy)

- Be a member of the Policy Council and/or Health Advisory and/or School Readiness Team
- Parent Group meetings
- Family Events
- Opportunities and events offered by community partners
- Regular communication between family services workers and teaching staff

### **1302.16 Attendance**

Head Start teaching staff, Early Head Start nurturers and home visitors record attendance daily. Early Head Start nurturers, home visitors, and Head Start Family Services Workers track daily attendance for every enrolled child using ChildPlus. Via the Family Handbook and staff communication, CCCDC requests that families notify CCCDC staff of their child's absence within at least one hour of the child's program start time. If staff are not notified by parents, staff attempt to contact parent/guardians within one hour of program start time via phone calls, text messages, social media, etc. If children have two consecutive unexplained absences, a home visit is conducted.

Program staff use ChildPlus data and reports to identify children who are chronically absent and make efforts to improve child attendance. This tracking efforts begins no later than 60 days after the start of the program year and is ongoing throughout the school year.

All families are notified of the benefits of regular attendance via program communication including the Family Handbook, newsletters, and verbal communication between program staff. Program staff will also use individualized supports to promote regular attendance.

If a child stops attending school or a family discontinues participation in EHS Home Base home visits, the child will be withdrawn according to program policies and procedures.

### **1302.42 Child Health Status and Care; 1302.46 Family Support Services for Health, Nutrition, and Mental Health; 1302.81 Prenatal and postpartum information, education, and services**

Family Services Workers will provide support to parents/guardians to assure that children are healthy, ready to learn. These methods will include:

- Staff will notify and explain the services children will receive while enrolled in CCCDC to their parents/guardians and obtain advance permission for screenings and related services.
- Within 30 calendar days of children's enrollment, program staff will assure children have a medical and a dental home and health insurance. If children are in need of healthcare providers or do not have insurance, staff will guide parents in how to apply for Medicaid,

use the Community Resource Directory to refer parents to medical and dental providers, and assist them in obtaining health care if needed.

- Staff will provide families support in children being up to date on the Kentucky Early Periodic Screening Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) schedule for well-child and oral health care, (1302.42), including the Kentucky immunization enrollment requirements (1302.15). (Homeless children as defined in 1302.16(c)(1) are exempt from state immunization enrollment requirements.) Staff will aid parents in interpreting diagnostic and treatment procedures and ongoing healthcare plans.
- Staff will use ChildPlus to track health services, referrals, and monitor follow ups.

CCCCDC will offer medical, oral, nutrition and mental health education support services via Parent Group meetings, family events, home based nurturers' home visits, face-to-face communication with program staff via home visits or conferences, and/or referrals to educational opportunities provided by Community Resource Agencies. Parents will have the opportunity to participate in the following:

- Educational opportunities about preventive medical and oral health care, emergency first aid, environmental hazards, and health and safety practices for the home including health and developmental consequences of tobacco products use and exposure to lead, and safe sleep;
- Discuss their child's nutritional status with staff, including the importance of physical activity, healthy eating, and the negative health consequences of sugar-sweetened beverages, and how to select and prepare nutritious foods that meet the family's nutrition and food budget needs;
- Learn about healthy pregnancy and postpartum care, as appropriate, including breastfeeding support and treatment options for parental mental health or substance use problems, including perinatal depression;
- Learn about appropriate vehicle and pedestrian safety for keeping children safe.
- The Mental health consultant will be available to partner with families in a timely, effective manner and help parents understand mental health and access mental health interventions if needed.
- Discuss with staff and identify issues related to child mental health and social and emotional well-being, including observations and any concerns about their child's mental health, typical and atypical behavior and development, and how to appropriately respond to their child and promote their child's social and emotional development.

### **Family Partnership Services 1302.52 & 1302.82**

The early childhood nurturers/home based nurturers/family service workers will initiate, within 90 days of initial entry, the family partnership/needs assessment with all willing families to identify needs, determine family goals and strengths, and services and other support systems needed by the families. Family Services Workers will complete the program's Parent Family Community Engagement (PFCE) Assessment three times a program year, beginning, middle and end. Family Services Workers utilize the PFCE Assessment results to gauge and identify family strengths, needs, and progress. The PFCE Manager will analyze PFCE Assessment data and report to the Program Coordinator. This data helps guide program goals, family engagement goals and planning, and school readiness goals for children and families. Throughout the school year, individualized family partnership services are supported by ongoing communication with families, such as home visits, phone calls, and/or conferences.

Staff work collaboratively with community partners and service providers to ensure that referrals, services, and follow ups are provided to families and children in a timely and efficient manner. Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start will make available to all Head Start/Early Head Start families a Community Resource Directory in order for families to be aware of community resource providers.

Efforts will be made to work with other service providers, such as DCBS and First Steps, to ensure that no duplications or conflicts exist with preexisting family plans. Head Start/Early Head Start Family Partnership Agreements will be utilized to support the accomplishment of goals in pre-existing plans.

**Community Partnerships and  
Coordination with Early Childhood and Education Programs**

Performance Standard: 1302.53

**Objective:**

- To establish ongoing collaborative relationships with community partners.
- To ensure an active role in community planning that encourages strong communication, cooperation and the sharing of information among agencies and community partners that will improve the lives of families and children.

**Justification:**

The program's relationships and partnerships with community agencies are vital in supporting families and children who may need assistance in acquiring access to community services to support their needs and goals. Assisting families in accessing community agencies to support their needs and goals will educate families in self-sufficiency and promote their independence.

Collaboration with community partners will not only support the families and children that the program serves, it will also promote community growth and continual increased quality of the program's services to children and families.

**Approach:**

In an effort to be involved within the community and be able to provide families and children with ongoing support, the Head Start/Early Head Start Management Team, Family Service Workers, and teaching staff work hard to develop relationships and partnerships with community service providers to encourage strong communication, cooperation, and the sharing of information among agencies.

The program will use data from the community assessment and other pertinent program plans, documents, and data to identify services needed by and provided to families. Appropriate documentation will be maintained to reflect the community partnership efforts of the Head Start/Early Head Start Program. The PFCE Manager and other management team member will make efforts to form relationships, written partnerships or contracts with the following community agencies: health care providers, including mental health and substance abuse providers, dental care providers, nutrition service providers, and prenatal and postnatal care supports; First Steps, the Local Education Agency (LEA), child care providers, Department for Community Based Services, the public library, Kathryn Winn Primary School, Cartmell Elementary School, Jefferson Community and Technical College, the Community Action

Agency, the Extension Agency, the Housing Assistance authority, and other agencies that may provide assistance to families and children.

Program Management staff participate in the early childhood council at both the county and regional levels to foster quality early childhood services. Program staff also participate in training and professional development opportunities at the local, state, and regional levels to stay abreast of important information and trends and take a proactive approach in continual improvements.

The Head Start and state preschool program are blended and the appropriate memorandum of understanding (MOU) exists with the Carroll County Board of Education.

CCCDC participates in state licensed child care and Kentucky's Quality Rating and Improvements System to assure quality services to children and families. The program also uses state data that is relevant to its program and incorporates such in its program plans and other related documents.

### **1302.62 Services for Families of Children with Disabilities**

CCCDC works closely with First Steps, Kentucky's provider of disability services for children ages birth to three, partnering with First Steps to recruit children with special needs into the EHS program, referring families with children with potential developmental delays to First Steps, transitioning children with IFSPs into the program, and transitioning children with IFSPs into the Head Start/state Preschool program upon their third birthday if they meet the state IDEA eligibility guidelines.

CCCDC implements the LEA's disability services and its Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) to collaborate with the parents of children with disabilities age 3 to 5 years. Parents/guardians are always invited to ARC meetings and encouraged to attend. Every effort is made to schedule meetings at a mutually convenient time for parents and LEA/Program staff. CCCDC and the ARC work collaboratively to meet children's needs and support parents in understanding the ARC process, be an active participant in the referral and eligibility process, understand evaluation and therapy services, and be advocates for their children's needs and services.

The ARC, CCCDC staff, LEA staff, and the program's Mental Health Consultant and Parent Group offer opportunities such as ARC meetings, Parent Group meetings, parent teacher conferences, and other individualized efforts as appropriate to assure that parents understand their child's disability and how they can encourage growth in their child's skills and knowledge. CCCDC staff will assist families in obtaining other needed services and supports through the ARC, teacher-family relationships, and family partnerships process.

### **Transition Services 1302.70, 1302.71, 1302.72**

CCCDC implements transition methods to support children and families entering and departing its EHS and HS/Preschool programs. Parents will be encouraged and assisted in becoming their child's advocate as they transition into and out of the EHS and HS programs.

Parents/Guardians of children transitioning into EHS/HS from the First Steps Early Intervention Program are offered a transition meeting including First Steps personnel and CCCDC staff. Every effort is made to plan the transition meeting 6 months prior to the third birthday for children transitioning into HS/PS. The transition meeting gives parents an opportunity to learn more about the program, meet staff, and plan next steps for their child's transition.

An initial home visit is conducted for all children entering the EHS and HS programs at the beginning of the school year. Every effort is made to schedule these home visits prior to the first day of school in order for the parents and child to meet the teacher before school begins. The teacher will schedule each home visit at a time which is convenient for the parent. These visits will be conducted in the home unless the parents ask that the visits be conducted somewhere other than the home or the home may be an unsafe environment for program staff. In either of these situations, the visit can be conducted at Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start or another mutually convenient public location, such as the public library. Home visits offer an opportunity to initiate the parent-teacher-child relationship, learn individual children's interests and needs, discuss parent's and teacher's expectations, and help prepare the child and parent for school. Staff are also able to offer additional materials and resources to families as necessary.

In addition to center-based services, CCCDC operates an EHS Home-Based option for families who do not have a need for the center-based program. In this option, parents are an integral part of the home visit as the home visitor must meet with the parent/guardian of that child on a weekly basis. The home visitors are assigned a case-load of no more than 12 families and they make regular weekly visits with families and children. Home Visitors also plan a minimum of two socialization opportunities each month.

CCCDC also schedules a Meet and Greet Event and Ready Fair/Open House for families and children prior to the school being in session so that children and families have the opportunity to meet program staff, visit the center, and learn more about the program.

Six months prior to a child's third birthday (or when services begin if child's birthday is already within 6 months), EHS Nurturers will initiate the transition process with families, explain its purpose, the need for developmentally appropriate preschool placement, and both the program's and parent's roles during transition. Parents will receive a letter with a copy of the transition procedure. The nurturer will document parental preferences for placement.

In March, EHS parents will receive a transition packet that includes an application to the Head Start Program. Additional assistance from the ERSEA Manager and/or Head Start Family Service Workers will be available for questions regarding the application process. In April/May, prior to the start of summer services, EHS nurturers will follow-up on the parent's preference for placement. Enrollment packets for Head Start placement will be collected from families and given to the ERSEA manager. Nurturers will complete a Child Information Form on each child to be given to the receiving program.

A Transition Event will be held at CCCDC for EHS children and parents to meet preschool age teaching staff and other CCCDC staff, visit the preschool classrooms, and learn about and experience the preschool classroom setting.

CCDC implements a curriculum that fosters school readiness skills throughout children's enrollment in order to support children's ongoing developments and prepare them for their upcoming transitions. In late winter or early spring, Head Start Family Services Workers begin communication with HS families in order for appropriate registration documentation to be transferred to the Primary School. Teaching staff discuss Kindergarten readiness with parents at their second parent-teacher conference and the end of school year home visit. ARC meetings occur for children with IEPs in order to transition the child and family to Kindergarten. A Kindergarten Transition Event is held in order for children and parents to visit the Primary School, meet Primary School Staff, experience a Kindergarten classroom, and have discussions with both the CCCDC and Primary School Staff. Communication between Primary School Staff, CCCDC staff, and parents to discuss the individual progress of children will be ongoing throughout the transition process.

If a family moves out of the county and withdraws their child from CCCDC, staff make efforts to support the family's and child's transition to other EHS or HS programs. If an EHS or HS program is unavailable in the community the family is moving, efforts will be made to locate an early childhood program that will meet the family's and child's needs. If a family decides to discontinue their child's enrollment in CCCDC and wishes to transfer their child to another early childhood program, staff will offer the family assistance in the transition process.

## **Disability Services**

Performance Standard 1302.60, 1302.61, 1302.62, 1302.63

### **Objective:**

- To efficiently and timely identify children with disabilities
- To provide strategies to meet the needs of children with disabilities.
- To integrate services with First Steps and the LEA
- To ensure resources are used efficiently
- To effectively document services being offered
- To make the facility and materials accessible to all children
- To provide special equipment as needed
- To provide all services necessary to meet the special needs
- To provide appropriate transitioning into and out of the Head Start and Early Head Start program
- To provide staff training to support special services
- To participate as appropriate in the development of the IFSP and/or IEP to meet needs of identified child
- To recruit and enroll all children identified with or suspected of having special needs

### **Justification:**

Head Start/Early Head Start must take an active role in ensuring all children with disabilities and their families are actively recruited, enrolled, and served. Children with disabilities must be given access to all needed services in order to give them a Head Start/Early Head Start to becoming successful students and citizens.

### **Approach:**

Disability services begin with active recruitment of children with disabilities in our community. The Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start Program collaborates with First Steps and the local LEA. The program is an active participant in Project Child Find to recruit children with disabilities. Because Head Start/Early Head Start information is disseminated throughout the county, parents often are aware of the program services and they themselves make the contact. The Disability Coordinator contacts any parent that has been referred or who has contacted the program. No matter how severe the disabilities, all children who meet program criteria are enrolled in the program.

All of our children participate in the developmental screening processes within 45 days of entry into the program. Children are screened using the Brigance tool in the Early Head Start program and the Head Start program. Head Start/Early Head Start staff administers the screening within 45 days of enrollment. Parents play an important part in the screening process. Screeners are completed in collaboration with parent opinion. This allows parents the

opportunity to evaluate specific developmental areas concerning their child. This information is included in the child's final score. Whenever possible, these questionnaires are completed on the teacher's first home visit.

The disability coordinator scores each screener after it is completed. The results are given to the classroom teacher and to the FSW. It is the FSW responsibility to add the results to the Child Plus tracking system. The teacher shares the results with the parents.

The disability coordinator contacts any parent whose child has not passed a part of the screener. This is done by phone or home visit whenever possible in order for the disability coordinator to answer any questions the parent may have. The coordinator explains the results to the parent and the RTI process begins. Assigned teacher monitors RTI data. Students not making necessary gains from RTI are referred for additional services. An ARC meeting is scheduled and the parents' permission will begin the referral process. For children within the Early Head Start program, First Steps will become involved and further assessments will take place and if necessary an IFSP will be developed.

For the preschool children, an initial ARC meeting is arranged based on the parents' schedule. Times of the meeting are always agreed upon by the parent before being scheduled. Because the parent plays a primary role in the child's life and in the ARC process, the ARC meeting is usually rescheduled if the parent is not able to attend. During the initial ARC meeting, the multidisciplinary team consisting of the classroom teacher, the disability coordinator, the parent, a special needs teacher and other service professionals (speech pathologist, OT /PT) as needed, to determine if additional evaluations and meetings are necessary. This is always done with parent permission. The parent also provides information for the team by completing a Developmental History on the child.

If further evaluations are needed, another ARC meeting is scheduled to discuss the results. If the child meets state qualifying criteria, the committee, as a team, writes an IEP for the child. This is done with parent permission and input. Other meetings may take place if necessary. These may be required because other evaluations are still needed or the parent may request additional meetings to obtain more information.

The IEP is a collaborative effort between the team. It includes specific measurable objectives, intervention strategies and a schedule of services. Parent input is given priority.

Throughout these processes the teaching staff and the disability coordinator work with the parents to answer questions or to discuss concerns. Additional information for the parent may be provided through literature or outside referrals to help the parent better understand their child's disability. A copy of 'Parental Rights' are given to the parent at each ARC meeting. Parents are encouraged to share any of their concerns at any time and these will be included in conference summary minutes, etc. Parents also receive copies of

any paperwork that is completed.

Services begin as soon as parent permission has been given and the IFSP and/or IEP has been written. The professional, who provides a service, monitors the specific objectives. Classroom teachers are included in this. The disability coordinator monitors services and maintains special education information.

Parents are informed regularly about their child's progress. Parent teacher conferences are held three times a year. Teacher's also send home notes or make phone calls whenever appropriate. Progress reports are also available whenever a parent requests the information.

Annual meetings are held to review the child's progress. The disability coordinator is responsible for setting up all meetings and for contacting all committee members. The disability coordinator also is responsible for getting progress reports to parents throughout the year when requested. Additional meetings may be held at the parent's request or by request of the staff.

The Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start Program believes that children with disabilities thrive when they are in the least restrictive environment. Whenever possible the child receives services in a regular classroom setting and barriers preventing this are removed. Children with disabilities participate in all Head Start/Early Head Start components as all other children do. The child participates in the regular classroom routine.

Each year the Head Start/Early Head Start budget is reviewed and prior to preparing the grant's refunding application, any services, additional equipment or building modifications necessary for those children already in the program are discussed by the management team for the next year. These items are included as budgetary requirements for the upcoming year.

Transitioning out of the Head Start/Early Head Start Program and into the Head Start and/or public school setting is accomplished through a transition meeting with the local primary school, Kathryn Winn Primary School. The transition process includes the parent and allows the parent time to meet with the child's new team of providers before the start of the new year. Parents are encouraged to visit the Primary School prior to child's entry to become comfortable in the new surroundings. Disabilities coordinator works in collaboration with the primary school counselor to assist with this transition.

Collaborative agreements with First Steps and the LEA are in place to formalize the LEA's role and Head Start/Early Head Start's role in providing equipment and services to our children with disabilities. The LEA provides special education personnel, who work in the program daily. A special education director, provided by the Carroll County Board of Education, oversees the special education program, and serves as a resource when concerns or issues arise. The Disability Coordinator works with the LEA to ensure all adaptive equipment, services and renovations are provided.

The Disability Coordinator works with teachers to make any adaptations to routines, activities, and schedules so that the inclusion of all children can be maximized. Each child's needs are viewed individually, so as to allow that child to fully participate in the program.

Training and information is provided on specific disabilities as needed. This may be based on the need of an individual teacher or the results of the annual program self-assessment. The Disability Coordinator is responsible for setting up these trainings.

Student records are kept at the Head Start/Early Head Start office. Copies are also maintained at the Carroll County Board of Education. All records are confidential and a list of personnel with record access is maintained with the student files. File access follows the procedures for the Carroll County Board of Education.

The Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start Program follows all policies of the Board of Education regarding process, confidentiality, and special education regulations.

**Transportation**  
Performance Standard  
1303.70-1303.75

**Objective:**

- To transport students to and from school in a safe and timely manner, attempting to keep the route an hour or less, when possible.

**Justification:**

We know that transportation is an essential part of our Head Start program and we strive to meet the needs of all our families by continuing to provide services during very difficult financial times. Carroll County Head Start/Early Head Start will not provide daily transportation for the Early Head Start program.

**Approach:**

All Head Start buses must:

- Include a trained bus monitor
- Be equipped with a communication system
- Maintain safety equipment for emergency use including; a fire extinguisher, a first aid kit, child restraints and as least four seat belt cutters.
- Have assigned seats as detailed on each seating chart.
- Maintain copies of children's release cards and each student can only be released to a parent or legal guardian/ or other individual listed on the release card.
- Be checked at the end of each route to ensure that no student is left behind.
- Have a thorough safety inspection each month by a mechanic at the bus garage.

All Head Start bus drivers must:

- Maintain a valid commercial driver's license (CDL)
- Participate in an annual 8 hour bus update training
- Have a yearly physical exam
- Participate in CPR/First Aid /AED training
- Report all medications being taken to the director of transportation
- Perform daily pre-trip inspections on the bus
- Participate in four bus evacuation drills during the school year
- Keep the bus clean
- Maintain a bus route
- Follow all state and local regulations/ laws.

When possible, stops must be located to eliminate the need for children to cross the street when boarding or leaving the bus. If children must cross the street before boarding or after leaving the bus, they must be escorted across the street by a bus monitor. Busses must not be loaded beyond the maximum passenger capacity at any time. Busses must not be required to

back up or make “u” turns, except when necessary, for reasons of safety or because of physical barriers. Drivers must know alternate routes in the case of hazardous conditions that could affect the safety of the children/ students, such as ice or water build up, natural gas line breaks or emergency road closings.

The Head Start program must provide training for parents and children in pedestrian and bus safety within the first thirty days of the program.

## **Pregnant Women**

Performance Standard: 1302.80

### **Objective:**

To offer services to pregnant women who need additional support systems during their pregnancy to provide their child with a healthy start.

### **Justification:**

Research indicates that the prenatal period sets the stage for a child's wellbeing upon birth. The Carroll County Early Head Start program has designed a system to work with pregnant women and their families in an effort to help those families give their child a healthy start.

### **Approach:**

Pregnant women and their family members will be visited throughout their pregnancy. These visits will be conducted by Early Head Start Nurturer/Family Service Worker who will determine the visitation schedule with input from the pregnant woman.

Within 30 days of enrollment of an expectant family into the Early Head Start program, the assigned Nurturer/Family Service Worker will determine an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care, and health insurance coverage. If an enrolled pregnant woman does not have an ongoing source of health care or insurance, the FSW must, as quickly as possible, facilitate access to health care using community resources. As required by the Performance Standards, the EHS program will ensure that the following prenatal and postpartum care received by the family is facilitated:

- Early and continuing risk assessments, including nutritional status and food assistance if necessary;
- Medical and Dental examinations on an appropriate schedule as determined by the health care providers; and
- Mental health intervention and follow-up as needed, including substance abuse prevention and treatment if necessary.
- Emergency shelter or transitional housing in cases of domestic violence.

Prenatal education will be provided to the pregnant women and their families by the assigned Nurturer/Family Service Worker through the use of the *Partners for a Healthy Baby* curriculum. The use of this curriculum will ensure that all the Performance Standard required education is provided while also offering many other valuable resources to these women.

All enrolled pregnant women will also receive a comprehensive array of family services while enrolled in the prenatal option. This means that these families understand their importance within the EHS program and understand that they can continue receiving EHS services even after the birth of the baby.

Within two-weeks of the newborn's birth, a visit by the program nurse will be made. During this visit the program nurse, along with input from the assigned

Nurturer will ensure that the child and family have what they need and to ensure their well-being. During this visit the program nurse will conduct a post-partum depression screening and quick newborn assessment. The assigned Nurturer will continue to make visits with the family following the birth and until the transition from pregnant women services to the home-based or center-based option for the child begins. The decision as to what option the child will be enrolled will be made by family and EHS staff during the prenatal period.