**CHILD & FAMILY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

**of Community Action Team**

Reciprocal Relationship - Family Partnership Process

Community Action Team’s Child and Family Development Programs (CFDP) are designed to provide enrolled families opportunities to establish a positive working relationship between themselves, their CFDP staff, and their community. Within the process of building this partnership, families are assisted in identifying their strengths, interests and needs. The information families provide on the Family Needs/Interests/Strengths Assessment form 5-28ahelps the program and community agencies determine how they may best work with each family and develop parent center training plans to support families. The family partnership process maintains and supports family strengths, interests and needs to develop ways to assist families. The Family Plan and Goal Sheet form 5-4 is developed, written using SMART Goals, and signed by the family and CFDP staff. They agree to act as partners in achieving the family goals outlined in the “Family Plan and Goal Sheet”. Throughout this process, staff members strive to enhance families’ problem-solving and goal-setting skills.

The partnership between parents and Head Start staff is fundamental to children’s current and future success and school readiness.

For families enrolled in the Home Base model the Family Partnership Process must include the specific roles of parents during group socializations and home visits [45 CFR 1304.40(a)(2)].

**PROCEDURE**:

1. Reciprocal Relationships (Family Partnerships) with families are developed within ninety days of enrollment. Goal setting is initiated as soon as families indicate they are ready to participate. CFDP staff will review the child’s file prior to the home visit. This will give staff additional information about the family culture, family interests and strengths already identified as well as any needs requiring support.
2. The Family Needs/Interests/Strengths Assessment Tool (Form 5-28a) will be used to organize information, for follow-up services, and for initiating conversation about specific topics. The Family Needs/Interests/Strengths Assessment Tool will also be used to develop shared SMART goals with families and for outcomes in the area of Parent, Family and Community Engagement. This assessment is ongoing throughout the year and begins with the first staffing. Refer to 5-28a Guidance.
3. To promote all facets of family and community engagement, Families enrolled in a center-base program with have a total of seven (7) family contact visits throughout the year. Teachers complete two (2) Ed home visits per year plus two (2) PTC per year. In addition, families receive a minimum of three (3) SS home visits. Social service home visits may be completed by a center manager, family engagement support staff, assistant teacher or teacher.

D. Staff will contact each family to schedule the home visit. The family will be made aware of the purpose for the visit, how much time it will take (this will vary based upon individual families), what information is needed, and how information will be used.

E. The families planning and goals may blend family service plans when the family is already connected to other community agencies for family services. A release of information will be completed so that the other agencies can share in the Family Plan and Goal process. A copy of the family plan will be placed in the family file. This plan will identify the responsibilities of those involved (i.e. Head Start staff, family member(s), and other agency staff).

F. In promoting family well being, staff will acknowledge the family’s ability to identify what they do well and to communicate what they need. Staff will listen to the family’s feelings and desires, and will incorporate into the Family Plan and Goal setting process. To enhance positive parent-child relationships, during the visit, staff will also include the child educational goals and questions or concerns generated during file reviews or staffings.

G. Staff will value the importance of effective, positive communication when interacting with families. They will clarify ideas, and dispel any misperceptions that may arise during their conversations with families. They will consistently reinforce family strengths and interests, while acknowledging accomplishments and successes.

H. Throughout the school year, staff have various opportunities to learn about the different interests, skills, and talents of each family. Family members will be encouraged and invited to share their interests and ideas with others in the program. To provide a greater opportunity for participation and sharing, staff will also assist in identifying or helping plan activities that relate to these interests, skills, or talents.

1. Staff will use motivational interviewing in a natural flowing conversation during the home visit. The Family Needs/Interests/Strengths Assessment is a tool used to guide the development of family goals built on strengths.
2. Staff may ask the following suggested questions during the home visit as a way to assist families in naming, or stating, a goal:
	1. What is going well for your child and family?
	2. What resources or supports are important to your family (examples; friends, family, counselors, WIC, DHS)?
	3. Do you have special concerns or issues you would like to discuss?
	4. What important things would you like to have happen or change for your child or family?
	5. How can Head Start help support your efforts?
	6. Where do you see yourself, or your family, next year at this time? In 5 years, etc.? In thinking about the day, what is your favorite part of the day? What works well at this time?
	7. In thinking about the day, what is the part that frustrates you the most? What would you like to change about that part of the day?
3. Once a goal has been stated, staff will assist the family in developing the Family Plan and completing the Goal Sheet. Staff will assist parents in:

a. Writing SMART Goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely)

b. Breaking down the goals into manageable steps and;

c. Establishing timelines for each step and;

d. Within each step, identify who is responsible for the action stated.

 (Staff will help establish realistic expectations and timelines. Staff will assure confidentiality.)

1. After goals have been developed (this may take more than one home visit depending on the family), staff and family may wish to determine their next home visit for reviewing the goal, assessing mutual progress, and exploring other topics to enrich the relationship.
2. Staff will then record any new, pertinent information or changes in the child’s SOAP file within 2 working days. They will also make any necessary referrals. Staff will complete CP-5’s for all referrals and/or services provided to the family also documenting the completion of a social service home visit on the on form 2-21a Home visit summary. The Family Plan and Goal sheet is to be shared with and discussed between Direct Service Team members to further strengthen the partnership. Each social service home visit is recorded by staff using a form 2-6 (as well as form 5-4 when applicable). In addition, form 2-21a will be used by home visiting staff for tracking home visits.
3. Family Needs/Interests/Strengths Assessment, and Form 2-6 will be filed in the child’s Social Service file. A copy of the goal sheet (Form5-4) and Form 2-6 will be provided to the family. Tracking of the goals and continuing or emerging social service needs may be completed at the educational home visits by the teacher using the home visit form. Follow-through will be documented by using CP-5 forms, and teachers will communicate the updates to the direct service team as soon as possible after the home visits. As each family accomplishes the steps identified on the goal sheet, progress will be noted on the goal sheet and CP5. SOAP entries will also be made accordingly. The goals will change and develop as family needs, strengths, and interests change. Updating information on the Family Needs/Interests/Strengths Assessment is ongoing to track changes for family outcomes. The Family Needs/Interests/Strengths Assessment will be completed 3 times a year and turned in to Admin for data entry to track family outcomes. See guidance 5-28a.

CONSIDERATIONS IN DEVELOPING THE FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT:

Program staff will keep all aspects of the Head Start Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework at the forefront of the family engagement process at all times. Program staff needs to be clear on what information they want to obtain from each family, where it will be used, and how it will be used. Information that cannot be used constructively to assist the family is non-productive and not consistent with Performance Standards. Our recruitment and enrollment process will provide some family information, and this information should not be requested during the home visits for the Family Planning and Goal setting process. The Family Needs/Interests/Strengths Assessment and Guidance were designed to promote open-ended questions, allowing the family to actively participate and communicate their strengths, interests, and needs. It is recommended that staff use motivational interviewing techniques to assist families in setting their own goals. Staff helps families identify steps to take to reach their goals. The forms also provide a format to guide families to develop a realistic plan of action—one that can be completed over the year, or can continue after transitioning out of Head Start.

***FAMILY PARTNERSHIP FLOW CHART***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Establish relationships with family starting with recruitment  | → | ~ Share family profile at staffings~ Strengthen family relationship at orientation~ Begin home visits |  |  |
|  |  | ↓ |  |  |
| Maintain family contacts, plans and notes regarding services | ↔ | ~ Family completes the family needs, interest and strengths assessment cultural profile with staff support~ Parent Center Training plan proposed to center committee~ Home visits continue | ↔ | ~ Prepare family for transition activities~ Transition activities scheduled |
|  | ↓ |  |
| ↔ | ~ Family invited to participate in all aspects of the program~ Individual education plans are developed with family~ Family Partnership home visits planned~ Staffings held~ Training plan implemented~ Home visits continue | ↔ |
|  | ↓ |  |
| ↔ | ~ Family partnerships in place referral & follow-up ongoing ~ All staff reinforce home to school partnerships~ Home visits continue  | ↔ |
|  |  | ↓ |  |
|  |  | ~ DST and families work hand in hand to provide access to community services ~ Staffings held~ Partnership agreements reviewed and modified through  on-going Home visits | ↔ |