

**Community Action Team
CHILD & FAMILY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

Family Partnership Procedure

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 for the Family Needs/Interests/Strengths Assessment assists the program and community agencies in how they may best work with each family and develop parent 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 Planning Sheet Form 5-4 is developed, written using SMART Goals, and is developed in collaboration with the parent. Parents agree to act as partners in achieving the family goals outlined in the Family Planning Sheet. Throughout this process, staff members strive to enhance families' problem-solving and goal-setting skills.

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

PROCEDURE:

- A. Family Partnerships are developed in collaboration with families 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 Child Plus documentation 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.
- B. The Family Strengths/Interests/Needs Assessment in Child Plus supports work with families by helping to organize information, for follow-up services, and for initiating conversation about specific topics. The Family Strengths/Interests/Needs Assessment 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. Child Plus report 4210 – Family Outcomes Assessment Worksheet can be used to support staff in completing the assessment with families.

- C. Information that supports completion of the Family Strengths/Interests/Needs Assessment is collected in a variety of ways, including home visits, family events, informal contact during drop and pick up, etc. It is important staff work together to share and discuss information related to the assessment when the family is enrolled in more than one service model, including Healthy Families.
- D. 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 Planning Sheet. This plan will identify the responsibilities of those involved (i.e. Head Start/OPK staff, family member(s), and other agency staff).
- E. 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 Planning process. To enhance positive parent-child relationships, staff will also include the child educational goals and questions or concerns generated during file reviews or staffings.
- F. 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.
- G. 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.
- H. Staff will use motivational interviewing in a natural flowing conversation during interactions. The Family Strengths/Interests/Needs Assessment is a tool used to guide the development of family goals built on strengths.
- I. Staff may ask the following suggested questions during interactions as a way to assist families in naming, or stating, a goal that is meaningful and relevant to the family. These conversations may best be addressed during longer interactions, such as a home visit, to allow for more in depth discussion and confidentiality:
 - a. What is going well for your child and family?

- b. What resources or supports are important to your family (examples; friends, family, counselors, WIC, DHS)?
 - c. Do you have special concerns or issues you would like to discuss?
 - d. What important things would you like to have happen or change for your child or family?
 - e. How can we help support your efforts?
 - f. Where do you see yourself, or your family, next year at this time? In 5 years, etc.?
 - g. In thinking about the day, what is your favorite part of the day? What works well at this time?
 - h. 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?
- J. Once a goal has been stated, staff will assist the family in developing the Family Planning 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. Staff will help establish realistic expectations and timelines. Staff will assure confidentiality.
- K. After goals have been developed (this may take more than one interaction 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.
- L. Staff will then record any new, pertinent information or changes in Child Plus upon completion of the visit. They will also make any necessary referrals. Staff document all referrals and/or services provided to the family in Child Plus in the Family Services module. The Family Planning 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 in Child Plus in the Family Service module. The Family Planning sheet will be documented in Child Plus in the Family Services module in Events and uploaded to Child Plus in the Family Services module.
- M. Tracking of the goals and continuing or emerging social service needs may be completed during home visits. Goals, progress, needs, etc. are then documented in the family services module in Child Plus as events. Staff 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 documented in Child Plus in the family services module as an action to the goal. The goals will change and

develop as family strengths, interests, and needs change. The Family Strengths/Interests/Needs Assessment will be completed 2 times a year and documented in Child Plus to the child's family services module for family outcome. It is required that for families enrolled in more than one service model, staff across the models collaborate to complete the assessment. 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 need 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 Head Start Program 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 Strengths/Interests/Needs 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 support families in identifying steps to take to reach their goals. The forms also provide a format to guide families to develop a plan of action that meets their needs.

FAMILY PARTNERSHIP FLOW CHART

