



DISABILITY SERVICES



Narrative/Profile - The disabilities services content area focuses on serving children with disabilities. These services are provided through collaborative efforts with ECI (Early Childhood Intervention) and the local education agencies which may include school districts, and in some cases, private providers.

Number of staff:

- 1 – Disabilities/Mental Health Services Coordinator
- 1 – Disabilities Technician
- 18 – Special Needs Assistants

Purpose/Expectation:

Disability Services ensures at least 10 percent of its total funded enrollment is filled by children eligible for services under IDEA. In order to meet this goal, the staff must recruit and enroll children throughout the community with qualifying disabilities. NCCA Head Start Program provides a full range of program services and activities to all Head Start children with disabilities and their families. Any modifications, if necessary, will be made to meet the individual needs of children with disabilities in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). In collaboration with the local education agency and ECI, Head Start is able to provide quality disability services to all children in an inclusive environment.

What are the criteria to enroll a child with a disability?

For a child to qualify as having a disability in the Birth to Five Head Start Program, the child must be evaluated and qualified through one of the following:

- ❖ Early Childhood Intervention (ECI), if the child is in Early Head Start
- ❖ Local Education Agency (ISD's), if the child is in Head Start.

Screening Tools:

Every child enrolled in Head Start will receive a speech screening within 45 days from the date of entry. Any further assessment/evaluation of children with suspected disabilities will be provided by ECI for Early Head Start and the local education agency in the child's attendance zone for Head Start.

Advisory Committee and Parent Support Group:

The School Readiness & Family Engagement Advisory Committee Meeting consists of parents, representatives of the school districts, licensed professional counselors, Community Partners and Head Start staff. The committee meets at least twice a year to discuss policies and procedures, issues that require input from the community, program practices, and information that affects Head Start families.

The S.E.A.T. (Social Emotional Awareness Team) meeting is a support group for parents and guardians. S.E.A.T is a safe place for open discussions about parenting, self-care tips, and an opportunity to create connections with other parents. The Social Emotional Awareness Team meets on a quarterly basis.

For more information regarding disabilities services, contact Disabilities/Mental Health Services Coordinator at (361) 654-7914 or the Disability/Mental Health Services Technician at (361)654-7937.