

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Narrative/Profile - The Family & Community Partnership Component recognizes parents as their children's primary teachers and nurturers, and implements intentional strategies to engage parents in their children's learning and development, and supporting parent-child relationships, including specific strategies for father engagement.

Parent and family engagement in Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) is about building relationships with families that support family well-being, strong relationships between parents and their children, and ongoing learning and development for both parents and children.

Our Family Engagement process encourages parents to establish trust and build-up rapport with staff. The process initiates as early in the program year as possible, and continues for as long as the family participates in the program, based on parent interest and needs.

Strong partnerships with families are essential to children's school readiness and healthy development.

The Family Advocates are here to work with parents and act as a support system for the entire family. By working with their Family Advocate, parents will have the opportunity to participate in a Family Partnership Process that includes:

- Family Partnership Agreement
- Identification of family strengths and needs
- Individualized family partnership services to set goals that address both, the family and the child's strengths and needs.
- Goal Setting Meeting (s)
- Support on any existing plans and community resources.
- Follow-up progress of goals and referral
- Ongoing communication to ensure family well-being

Family Advocates will aid with referrals on resources in the community regarding:

- ◆ Crisis assistance (food, clothing, shelter, etc.)
- ◆ Health and Nutrition
- ◆ Parenting Skills
- ◆ Domestic Violence
- ◆ GED Classes, Higher Education, ESL
- ◆ Employment
- ◆ Etc.

They will also refer families and staff to our Community Services Division.

NCCAA Birth-To-Five Head Start Program encourages parents and families to become involved in their children's education, both in and out of the classroom. All NCCAA Birth-to-Five Head Start centers/classrooms have an Open-Door Policy. This means parents are welcome to drop by and spend time with their child at any time.

The program also teaches parents how to create a learning environment at home in an effort to support classroom learning.

Parents are involved in the planning of program and/or classroom activities by serving on various Parent Committees, Advisory Committees and Policy Council Meetings. Other Family Engagement opportunities include:

- Parent Meetings (F.A.C.E., F.A.I.T.H., Wellness/ IMIL for Families, Christmas Festival, etc.)
- Parenting classes
- Content Area Advisory Committees
- Policy Council
- Conferences and training
- Volunteer in Center, classroom and or events
- Sharing craft skills such as carpentry, woodworking, sewing, etc.

Parents and families also have the opportunity to participate in a research-based parenting curriculum.

The curriculum builds on parents' knowledge and offers them the opportunity to practice parenting skills to promote children's learning and development.

The NCCAA Birth-To-Five Head Start Program establishes ongoing collaborative relationships and partnerships with community organizations to facilitate access to community services that are responsive to children's and families' needs and family partnership goals, and community needs and resources as determined by the community assessment. Our Program develops and maintains Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with community partners and health care providers to provide a variety of services to the families we serve.