

TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY COUNCIL, INC.
HEAD START
Mental Health

Child Mental Health Services

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE 1304.24: The Head Start Program will work collaboratively to build relationships with children, families, staff, Mental Health Professionals, and community.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: The Head Start Program will use a collaborative effort to raise awareness and understanding of mental wellness

APPROACH:

1. The Head Start Program will secure services of Mental Health Professionals.
2. The Head Start Program will develop a regular schedule of on-site mental health consultation.
3. The Mental Health consultation will include a Mental Health Professional, Program Staff, and Parents.
4. Staff communication with parents will build trusting relationships to allow parents to feel more comfortable in discussing issues related to Mental Health such as:
 - Typical behaviors in developmental and cognitive phases
 - Child's special interests, needs, and strengths
 - Changes in child's behavior, mood, or physical appearance
 - Information on health conditions that may influence a child's behavior.
5. Staff communication with parents will draw upon parent's knowledge of their child's development, and respects their parenting strengths, values, culture, and childrearing approach.

Evidence of compliance:

Mental Health Professional Contract, Center Sign-In Sheet, Documentation of observation and documentation in Family Files.

Staff Responsibility:

Family Service Worker, Center Coordinator, Mental Health Coordinator, all staff.

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Sharing Staff Observations

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE 1304.24 (a)(1) (ii): Staff will share child observations with parents and discuss child's behavior and development.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: Staff will exchange information with parents on typical child development that includes behavior, development, separations and attachment issues.

APPROACH:

1. Staff will assist parents in the recognition, and understanding of behavior that may indicate the child is responding to a stressful situation.
2. Staff will assist parents in helping child deal with separation and attachment issues.
3. Staff and parents will share approaches used to strengthen nurturing, supportive environments and relationships.
4. Staff will help parents gain a better understanding of Mental Health issues and increase the likelihood that parents will value and use available mental health information and services.
5. Staff will support parent's participation in any needed Mental Health Services by assisting parents in breaking down barriers to services.

Evidence of compliance:

Mental Health Professional Contract, Documentation of observation and documentation in Family Files, Referral Forms.

Staff Responsibility:

Family Service worker, Center Coordinator, Mental Health Coordinator, all staff.

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Mental Health Services

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: 1304.24(a)(3):

The mental health program services must include a regular schedule of on-site mental health consultation involving the mental health professional, program staff, and parents on how to:

- 1) Design and implement program practices responsive to the identified behavioral and mental health concerns of an individual child or group of children.
- 2) Assist in providing special help for children with atypical behavior or development.
- 3) Utilize other community mental health resources as needed.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

A Head Start child with a disability will be seen on a regular basis regarding his/her disability throughout the school year.

APPROACH:

- 1.The mental health provider, Life Management, or C.O.P.E., will visit the Head Start Center at least once a month to observe and assess in the classroom, and/or to work with a particular child if referral has been submitted.
- 2.The mental health provider will discuss with the teacher and staff, any issues that arise during the observation.
- 3.The mental health provider will provide documentation of the observation and send the report to the Mental Health Coordinator on a monthly basis.
- 4.If the existing agency cannot meet the needs of a child, then the Mental Health Coordinator will assist staff and families in making contact with any and all existing resources that promote healthy child development.

Evidence of Compliance:

Mental Health professional contract, center sign-in sheets, documentation of the observation/session.

Staff Responsibility:

Mental Health Professional, Disability/Mental Health Coordinator, Center Coordinator, Family Service Worker, All Staff

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Staff and Parent Education Regarding Mental Health Issues

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE 1304.24 (a)(3)(iv):

Head Start will promote children's mental health wellness through providing group, staff, and parent education on mental health issues.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

Head Start will provide parents and staff educational opportunities in regard to mental health issues throughout the year.

APPROACH:

1. Training and education will take place during:
 - Parent Meetings
 - Home Visits
 - Conferences
 - In-Service Trainings
 - Monthly Newsletters
 - Staffing
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2. Staff will work with Mental Health Professional and parents to help the child practice skills that will foster healthy mental development.
3. Head Start will provide access to Mental Health Professionals through parent meetings, home visits, and conferences.
4. Head Start will assist parents in accessing community mental health resources by providing the information and referrals needed to ensure direct contact with a service provider.

Evidence of Compliance:

Meeting agendas, sign in sheets, monthly newsletters, home visit documentation, conference documentation, parent contact form, staffing forms.

Staff Responsibility:

Disability/Mental Health Coordinator, Center Coordinator, Family Support Workers, Teaching Staff.

Mental Health Service Plan

1304.24

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Working collaboratively with Parents

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE 1304.24 (a)(1) (i): Staff and delegate agencies must work with parents/guardians for issues related to parent education of mental wellness.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: Staff and mental health providers will solicit parental information, observations, and concerns about their child's mental health.

APPROACH:

1. Staff will draw upon parent's knowledge of their child's development through formal and informal opportunities such as home visits, conferences, or parent meetings.
2. Staff will incorporate information from the family partnership agreement into the discussion with respect to the family's strengths, values, culture, and childrearing approach.
3. Communication about a child's mental health may be a sensitive subject for the family and must be approached with care.
4. Staff must take time, establish a rapport with the parent and build a trusting relationship with parents to allow the parents to become more comfortable discussing issues relating to mental health.
5. Information drawn from discussions is used to help individualize services for each child and will bring a better understanding of child's social/emotional behavior patterns.
6. Discuss and identify with parents appropriate responses to their child's behaviors.
7. Support parents' participation in any needed mental health intervention.

Evidence of Compliance: Documentation of meeting with parent form. Mental Health Referral forms.

Staff Responsible: Mental Health Coordinator, all teaching and support staff.

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Discussing and identifying with parents appropriate responses to their child's behavior.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE 1304.24 (a)(1) (iii): Staff and parents will share positive approaches they use to respond to a child's behavior.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: Family partnerships with Head Start parents will help provide consistency in the child's life.

APPROACH:

1. Staff will educate parents in child's imitation of adult's behavior, how child will copy a parent's response to stress, positive parenting techniques.
2. Factors of developmental change and child's environment will be considered in the discussion of child's behavior with the parents.
3. Assist parents in the use of positive parenting techniques such as:
 - Anticipation and elimination of potential problems.
 - Redirection of child away from conflict to more positive activity.
 - Offering the child choices.
 - Helping a child learn about the logical consequences of their actions.
 - Encouraging respect for the feelings and rights of others.
4. Staff will document and discuss behavior problems with the parents.
5. Staff will be aware of parent's approach to difficult behavior in the home.
6. Staff will be aware of any factors that may be affecting the child's behavior.
7. Staff will be aware of any health issues that may be affecting the child's behavior.
8. Training and information of age-appropriate behaviors will be available to the parents.

Evidence of Compliance: Documentation of any parent/staff meeting and/or conversation with the parent. Documentation of information presented to the parent through newsletter, hand-out, or meeting presentation.

Staff Responsibility: All administrative and teaching staff.

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**Guide to strengthen nurturing, supportive environments and relationships in
the home and Head Start.**

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE 1304.24 (a)(1) (iv): When interacting with children, staff will support the development of trust, self-esteem, and personal identity.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: A supportive environment will be established where the children are assisted in being comfortable, relaxed, happy, and involved in play and other activities.

APPROACH:

1. Demonstrate responsiveness to child's experiences, ideas, and feelings.
2. Staff will smile at the children.
3. Staff will quickly comfort a child in distress.
4. Staff will help children deal with anger, sadness, and frustration using positive social/emotional behavior techniques.
5. Staff will encourage children to use words instead of acts of anger to solve problems.

Evidence of Compliance: Documentation in education files, observation form, and anecdotal.

Staff Responsibility: All Head Start Staff

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Assist parents in their understanding of mental health issues.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE 1304.24 (a)(1) (v): A better understanding of mental health issues will increase the likelihood that parents will use and value the mental health information and services available to them.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: Staff and mental health providers will assist parents in gaining a better understanding of mental health issues and ensure needed resource information is available to the families.

APPROACH:

1. Provide parents an opportunity to learn about and participate in activities that promote mental wellness.
2. Provide access to mental health professionals through ongoing parent activities.
3. Assist parents as needed in accessing mental health resources.
4. Provide information to parents regarding mental health issues and services.

Evidence of Compliance: Documentation from parent meetings, activities, and staffings.

Staff Responsibility: Family Service Worker, Center Coordinator, Mental Health Coordinator, Teaching staff.

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Supporting Parent's Participation in any needed Mental Health Intervention.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE 1304.24 (a)(1) (vi): Head Start staff will be supportive of any parent who participates in mental health intervention services.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: Family will be made aware that staff is available to discuss mental health issues and to provide parents with information about confidentiality of the information they may share.

APPROACH:

1. The Family Service Worker will document any concerns about family mental health issues in the family file after the information is shared by the parent.
2. Parents will be made aware of available community mental health resources.
3. Parents will be made aware of confidentiality procedures.
4. Parents will be made aware of assistance that Head Start will provide that will assist in allowing the parent to participate in intervention procedures such as:
 - Attending orientation meeting with mental health provider if requested to do so by the parent.
 - Assist in locating transportation or child care to allow parents' participation in mental health services.
 - Assist in locating financial assistance to pay for mental health interventions.
5. Staff will discuss the importance of intervention with the entire family.
6. Family Service Worker will request assistance and/or support from Family Service Coordinator as needed.

Evidence of Compliance: Documentation in Family file.

Staff Responsibility: Family Service Worker, Mental Health Coordinator, Center Coordinator

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Working collaboratively with Parents

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE 1304.24 (a)(2): Head Start will secure the services of Mental Health Professionals on regular basis to enable the timely and effective identification and intervention of family and staff concerns about a child's mental health.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: Staff and mental health providers will provide timely identification and intervention services that will address concerns about a child's mental Well-being.

APPROACH:

1. Child's behavior will be documented on Teacher Observation Form.
2. Observation forms will be sent to the Education Coordinator after three (3) incidents are documented.
3. The Education Coordinator will share the information with the Mental Health Coordinator.
4. Observations and intervention will be done initially by Head Start staff unless parent immediately request help from the mental health provider.
5. If deemed necessary, the Mental Health Coordinator will meet with the parent and get a referral form signed.
6. The Mental Health Professional will periodically observe in the classroom and concentrate on one child only if signed referral has been submitted..
7. The Mental Health Professional will consult with teachers and other staff members on any concerns regarding referred child.
8. The Mental Health Professional and Head Start staff will assure the active involvement of the parents in planning and implementing of any needed intervention for a child.
8. Staff will provide particular attention to pertinent medical and family history of each child so that mental health services can be made readily available as needed.
9. Mental health professionals include, but are not limited to: COPE in Walton County and Life Management in Holmes and Washington Counties.

Evidence of Compliance: Referrals, file documentation, service provider reports.

Staff Responsibility: Family Service Worker, Mental Health Coordinator, Teaching Staff

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Design and implement program practices responsive to identified behavioral and mental health concerns.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE 1304.24 (a)(3) (i): Promotion of child's mental wellness through group and individual staff and parent education on mental health issues.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: Staff will provide the Mental Health Professionals the opportunities to educate parents and staff on mental wellness.

APPROACH:

1. Opportunity for training will be provided on how to assess a child's strengths and needs.
2. Practices will be implemented that are responsive to the rapidly changing needs of young children.
3. Resources are made available to staff on a variety of mental health issues such as: Stress, resolving conflict, coping skills, substance abuse, and violence.
4. Staff will schedule needed conferences with parents and staff to share ideas for supporting children who have been identified as needing special assistance.

Evidence of Compliance: File documentation

Staff Responsibility: Family Service Worker, Mental Health Coordinator, Center Coordinator

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PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE 1304.24 (a)(3) (ii): Promotion of child's mental wellness through group and individual staff and parent education on mental health issues.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: Staff and parents will have the opportunity to gain knowledge of mental health issues and of available community resources.

APPROACH:

1. With the assistance of mental health professional, staff will provide a variety of opportunities for parents and staff to learn about mental health issues.
2. Included in the learning opportunities will be specific guidelines on how to seek help for mental health issues.
3. Any strengthening ties between staff and families will be encouraged and supported.
4. Through participation in group educational sessions, parents and staff will be encouraged to seek individual assistance as needed.
5. Mental Health Professionals will be invited to share information at meetings, trainings, staffing, and conferences.
6. Information on mental wellness can focus on a variety of topics such as:
 - Childrearing practices and concerns
 - Childhood Fears
 - Helping children adjust to changes in the family
 - Domestic Violence
 - Substance Abuse

Evidence of Compliance: File Documentation, meeting minutes

Staff Responsibility: Mental Health Coordinator, Family Service Worker, all Teaching and support staff.

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PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE 1304.24 (a)(3) (iii): Parents and Staff will be provided the opportunity to discuss with Mental Health Professionals ways to assist child with atypical behavior or development.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: All efforts will be made in providing the services needed for child with atypical behavior or development.

APPROACH:

1. Staff will maintain open communication with parents and Mental Health Professional to ensure that all efforts are made to assist child.
2. All efforts to assist child with atypical behavior/development will be thoroughly documented in the family file.
3. Staff will partner with the mental health professional to assist parents in gaining access to community agencies to ensure that IEP is properly implemented as needed.
4. Staff will make appropriate referrals for child's services through proper referral process.
5. Staff will visit home with mental health professional as needed.
6. Staff will discuss program modifications with appropriate staff and the mental health professional to ensure the needs of the child are met.

Evidence of Compliance: Documentation in Family File, classroom reports, and reports from mental health professional.

Staff Responsibility: Teaching Staff, Family Service Worker, Mental Health Coordinator

