

Tri-County Community Council, Inc.
Head Start/Early Head Start

Part: 1302 Program Operations
Subpart: D- Health Program Services
Section: 1302.45 Child Mental Health and Social & Emotional Well Being
Subject: Providing Information, Support and Referrals for Children and Families

Policy

Families of Head Start/Early Head Start children will be provided the opportunity to request mental health referrals to assist in strengthening their home environments. Parents will have access to a mental health consultant and opportunities to learn about and participate in mental wellness activities. Children who attend Head Start/Early Head Start will be provided mental health referrals as needed.

Procedures

1. A mental health referral will be completed for children and families that request those services. No child or family will be referred without their consent. Children who attend Head Start/Early Head Start may be referred, with parental consent, to a mental health service provider if a need is identified and the family is open to receiving assistance.
2. The family will not be pressured into receiving mental health services by staff.
3. A signed release of information will be completed by the parent/guardian and stored in the family file with a copy of the signed referral and full documentation of the discussion with the family.
4. Follow-up should be done by family services to ensure that the family's request for services is met in a timely manner. This follow-up will be done with the family member and the service agency if the family has not been contacted. If a child is not seen at the center in a timely manner the Mental Health Coordinator will be notified.
5. The service agency will be contacted by the Mental Health Coordinator if the service agency does not respond in a timely manner.
6. All referrals will be confidential, and no information will be provided to any service agency without a signed release of information.
7. Staff will provide mental health information and wellness activities to parents through activities, training, and the quarterly newsletters.
8. Staff will aid parents, if requested, by attending orientation meetings, completing paperwork, locating childcare, locating funding, or speaking to family members about mental health interventions.

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9. Staff will work with a mental health consultant to locate a provider for any child and family that needs services.

10. All referrals and assistance to the family will be documented in the Family File.