

HEAD START

Regional T/TA Network

Parent Power:

Partnering for Success in the

IEP/IFSP Process

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 Health and Family Institute
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A Show of Hands





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Objectives



Participants will:

- recognize rights and responsibilities of parents of young children in the special education process
- identify strategies Head Start and Early Head Start programs can use to build and support family leadership and advocacy in the special education process
- describe actions that Head Start and Early Head Start programs can take for collaboration with early intervention and special education agencies

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Supporting Head Start and EHS Parents in the IEP/IFSP Process



It's not just a good idea - it's the law!



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HS Program Performance Standards



§1302.62 Additional services for parents.

(a) Parents of all children with disabilities.

(1) A program must collaborate with parents of children with disabilities, including but not limited to children eligible for services under IDEA, to ensure the needs of their children are being met, **including support to help parents become advocates for services that meet their children's needs** and information and skills to help parents understand their child's disability and how to best support the child's development;

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HS Program Performance Standards



§1302.62 Additional services for parents.

(a) Parents of all children with disabilities

(2) A program must assist parents to access services and resources for their family, including securing adaptive equipment and devices and supports available through a child's health insurance or other entities, creating linkages to family support programs, and helping parents establish eligibility for additional support programs, as needed and practicable.

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HS Program Performance Standards



§1302.62 Additional services for parents.

b) Parents of children eligible for services under IDEA.

For parents of children eligible for services under IDEA, a program must also help parents:

- (1) Understand the referral, evaluation, and service timelines required under IDEA;
- (2) **Actively participate** in the eligibility process and IFSP or IEP development process with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA, including by informing parents of their right to invite the program to participate in all meetings;

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HS Program Performance Standards



§1302.62 Additional services for parents.

b) Parents of children eligible for services under IDEA.

For parents of children eligible for services under IDEA, a program must also help parents:

- (3) Understand the purposes and results of evaluations and services provided under an IFSP or IEP; and,
- (4) **Ensure their children's needs are accurately identified in, and addressed through, the IFSP or IEP.**

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HS Program Performance Standards



§1302.101 Management system

(b) Coordinated approaches. At the beginning of each program year, and on an ongoing basis throughout the year, a program must design and implement **program-wide coordinated approaches** that ensure:

- (3) **The full and effective participation of all children with disabilities**, including but not limited to children eligible for services under IDEA, by providing services with appropriate facilities, program materials, curriculum, instruction, staffing, supervision, and partnerships, at a minimum, consistent with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act18;

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Table Talk



Odd-numbered tables:

What hurdles do Head Start and Early Head Start families face in advocating for their children with disabilities?



Even-numbered tables:

What hurdles do Head Start and Early Head Start programs face in supporting families of children with disabilities?

- Identify top three for your group
- Prepare to report out *briefly*

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Federal and State Law and Policy

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act - IDEA



§1400 Subchapter 1 Part A

(d) Purpose

The purposes of this chapter are—

- (1) (A) to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living;
- (B) to ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and parents of such children are protected; and
- (C) to assist States, localities, educational service agencies, and Federal agencies to provide for the education of all children with disabilities;

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The IEP Team – Steers the Ship



§1414. Evaluations, eligibility determinations, individualized education programs, and educational placement

(d)(1)(B) Individualized education program team

The term “individualized education program team” or “IEP Team” means a group of individuals composed of—

- (i) **the parents of a child with a disability;**
- (ii) not less than 1 regular education teacher of such child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment);
- (iii) not less than 1 special education teacher, or where appropriate, not less than 1 special education provider of such child;

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The IEP Team also includes



(iv) a representative of the local educational agency who—

- (I) is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities;
- (II) is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum; and
- (III) is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the local educational agency;

(vi) at the discretion of the parent or the agency, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate;

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Educational Placement




§1414. Evaluations, eligibility determinations, individualized education programs, and educational placement


(e) Educational placements

Each local educational agency or State educational agency shall ensure that the parents of each child with a disability are members of any group that makes decisions on the **educational placement** of their child.

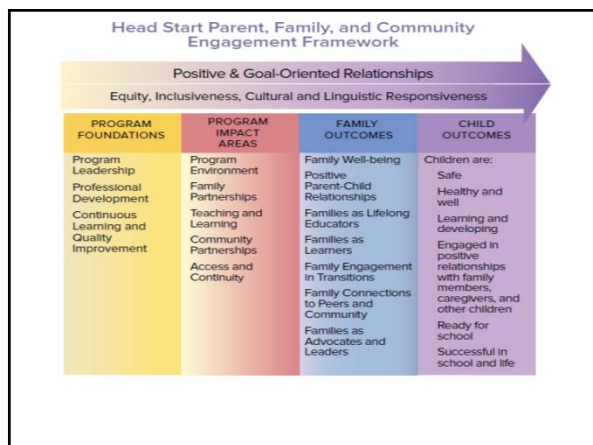
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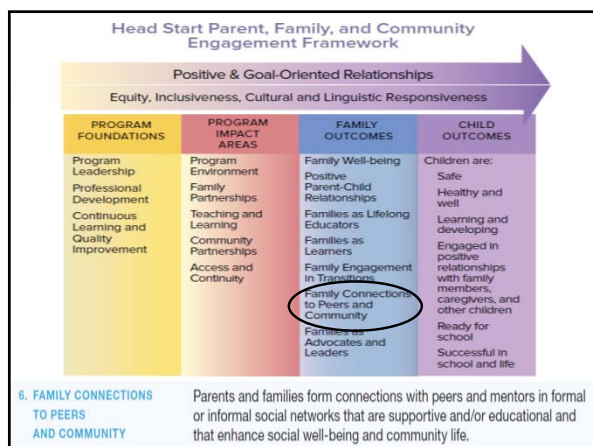


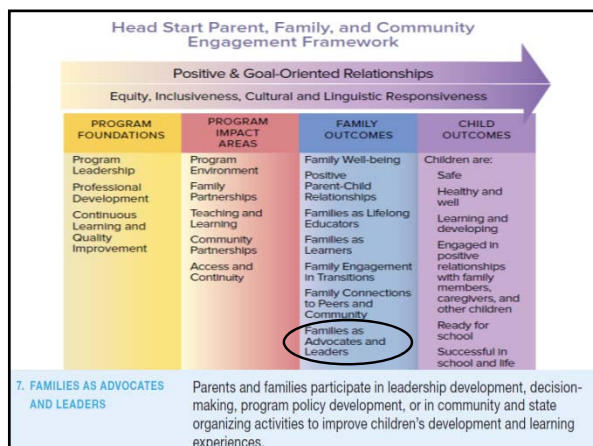
What does this mean for Family and Community Engagement in Head Start?



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Pair and Share





What do you do to support family advocacy when a child has special needs?

- With a partner, talk about actions *you* take to help families grow as advocates for their children
- List one action per post-it

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Role of the Family Engagement Professional




- Working with family to identify strengths and needs
- Supporting parents to identify goals in family partnership process
- Collaborating with disabilities manager
- Partnering with community agencies and resources

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Partnering with Families



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Strengths-Based Approach to Partnering with Families: **Attitudes**



- All families have strengths
- Families are the first and most important teachers of their children
- Families are our partners with a critical role in their child's development
- Families have expertise about their child and family
- Families' contributions are important and valuable



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Strengths-Based Approach to Partnering with Families: **Practices**



Using a strengths-based approach involves:

- acknowledging the strengths of families first
- respecting and learning from differences
- showing openness to adapting practice based on family preferences
- sharing decision-making
- approaching families as equal and reciprocal partners in support of their child

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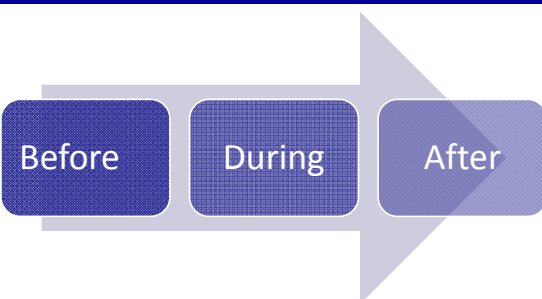
Partnering with Families of Children with Disabilities



- Reflect on your perspective.
- Help the family identify and work through their own assumptions.
- Identify and build on the family's strengths and core relationships.
- Celebrate successes while acknowledging struggles.
- Focus on their core values and aspirations, including important goals they are working toward. Explore their perspectives.

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Supporting Parents in IEP/IFSP Process



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Common Hurdles Where Parents May Need Support



- Parents don't understand the process
- LEA does not honor timelines
- LEA requires "Response to Intervention"
- Parties disagree about
 - eligibility determination
 - service level
 - educational environment
- Services aren't provided as planned

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Supporting Parents in IEP/IFSP Process: **Before**



- Observe and discuss child together
- Explore parents' beliefs and assumptions
- Help parents understand steps in the process as well as their rights and responsibilities
- Assist parents in navigating special education system and dealing with roadblocks

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Supporting Parents in IEP/IFSP Process: **Before**



- Prepare parents to share a full picture of their child, featuring the child's strengths
- Help parents consider and write down their questions for the IEP team
- Show sample forms, discuss how they are used
- **Support parents in identifying what they want for their child, including where services will be provided**



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HSPPS Subpart F — Additional Services for Children with Disabilities



§1302.60 Full participation in program services and activities.

A program must ensure enrolled children with disabilities, including but not limited to those who are eligible for services under IDEA19, and their families receive all applicable program services delivered in the least restrictive possible environment and that they fully participate in all program activities.

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Least Restrictive Environment: HSPPS



§1302.61 Additional services for children.

(c) Additional services for children with an IFSP or IEP. To ensure the individual needs of children eligible for services under IDEA are met, **a program must:**

(1) Work closely with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA, the family, and other service partners, as appropriate, to ensure:

(i) Services for a child with disabilities will be planned and delivered as required by their IFSP or IEP, as appropriate;

(v) Services are provided in a child's regular Early Head Start or Head Start classroom or family child care home to the greatest extent possible.

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Least Restrictive Environment



8VAC20-81-130. Least Restrictive Environment and Placements.

A. General least restrictive environment requirements.

1. Each local educational agency shall ensure: (34 CFR 300.114)

a. That to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, aged two to 21, inclusive, including those in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children without disabilities; and

b. That special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

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Educational Placement



8VAC20-131; 34 CFR 300 .116

1. In determining the educational placement of a child with a disability, including a preschool child with a disability, each local educational agency shall ensure that:

a. The placement decision is made by the IEP team in conformity with the least restrictive environment provisions of this chapter .

b. The child's placement is:

(1) Determined at least annually;

(2) Based on the child's IEP; and

(3) As close as possible to the child's home .

c. Unless the IEP of a child with a disability requires some other arrangement, the child is educated in the school that the child would attend if a child without a disability.

e. A child with a disability is not removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general curriculum.

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Supporting Parents

in IEP/IFSP Process: **During**



- Support parents in describing their child's strengths and challenges, including in the HS/EHS program
- Be a *jargon-buster*: ask team members to explain any technical or unfamiliar terms
- Pause the discussion as needed to ask for parent input and questions



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Supporting Parents

in IEP/IFSP Process: **During**



- Help keep the focus on the child and family
- Ask any questions you have – parents may have the same question
- Remind parents of ideas and preferences they shared before the meeting
- Pause before signatures to ensure parents agree with plan before they sign

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Parental Consent for IEP



INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) PRIOR NOTICE AND PARENT CONSENT

Student Name: _____ Date: ____/____/____ Page ____ of ____
Student ID Number: _____

PRIOR NOTICE

The school district proposes to implement this IEP. This proposed IEP will allow the student to receive a free appropriate public education as the least restrictive environment. This document is based upon a review of current records, current assessments and the student's performance as documented in the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance. Other options considered, if any, and the reasons for the proposed IEP are attached, or can be found in the Placement Decision section of this IEP. Additionally, other factors, if any that are relevant to this proposal are attached. Parent and adult student rights are explained in the Procedural Safeguards. If you, the parent(s) and adult student, send another copy of the Procedural Safeguards or need assistance in understanding this information please contact:

____ at (____) _____ or e-mail _____

____ Parent(s) initials here indicate that the parent(s) has read the above prior notice and attachments, if any, before giving permission to implement this IEP.

PARENT/ADULT STUDENT CONSENT. Indicate your response by checking the appropriate space and sign below:

☐ I give permission to implement this IEP.
☐ I do not give permission to implement this IEP.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Supporting Parents in IEP/IFSP Process: **After**



Work with your team to:

- Help parents support IEP goals at home
- Ensure that services are being provided as planned
- Follow up with parents to gauge their satisfaction with IEP services and their child's progress
- Connect parent with other families of children with disabilities, and with community resources
- Encourage and support ongoing advocacy
- Support parents in planning for transition

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Partnering with Special Education and Early Intervention



- Interagency agreements or memoranda of understanding
 - Sharing resources
 - Systems for referrals – Child Find
 - Troubleshooting procedures
- Local Interagency Coordinating Council
- Head Start Policy Council



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Resolving Differences



- Informal and formal processes
- Conversations, talking, clarifying: “try and try again”
- Mediation
- Complaints
- Due Process



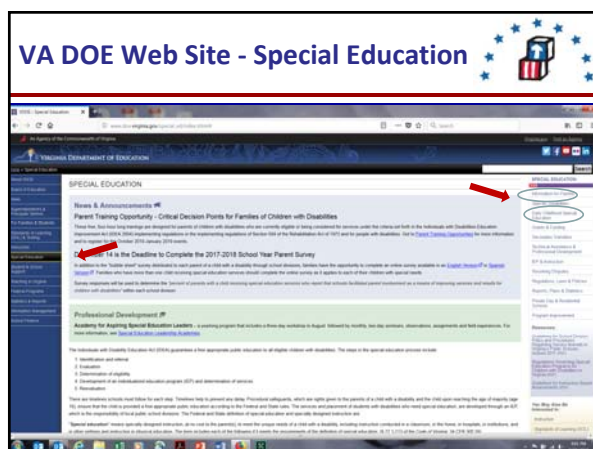
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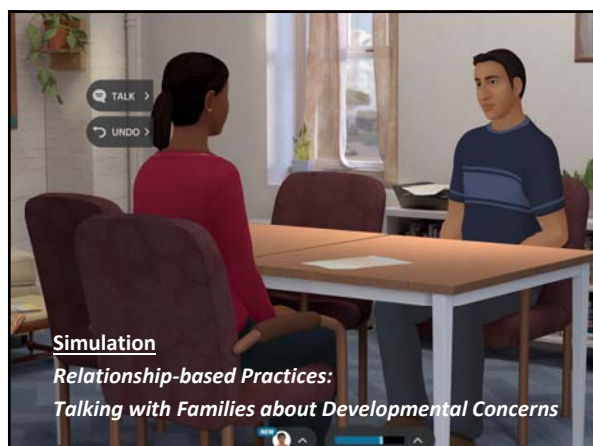
Important Resources



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VA DOE Web Site - Special Education





Simulation
Relationship-based Practices:
Talking with Families about Developmental Concerns

Next Steps



Where do you go from here?



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