

Developing Policies and Procedures to Support Mental Health Consultation

The table below lists programmatic areas where administrators should ensure that policies and procedures are developed to guide program practices. Each policy and procedure area includes relevant references to key Head Start Performance Standards (Office of Head Start, 2009). Because mental health consultation is collaborative in nature – involving the consultant, teachers, and other program staff – some Performance Standards are referenced twice to reflect the influence in both programmatic areas. When using the Performance Standards to guide policy and procedure development, each policy and procedure should also be specific to your unique program and translated into your program’s work plan for monitoring and accountability.

Areas for Policy and Procedure Development for Mental Health Consultation	Relevant Performance Standards
1. Roles/responsibilities of the mental health consultant working collaboratively with parents and staff and providing consultation services	1304.24(a) (1)(i-vi): Collaboration with Parents 1304.24(a) (2-3)(i-iv): Schedule and Frequency of Consultation 1304.20(b) (2): Direct Guidance on Screening 1304.20(b)(3): Multiple Sources of Information 1304.20(c) (1): System of Ongoing Communication 1304.20(c) 4: IEPs/IFSPs 1304.20(e)1-3: Familiarize Parents with Procedures 1304.20(f)1: Individualization 1304.21(a)3: Support Social Emotional Development 1304.40(b)(1): Accessing Community Services/Resources 1304.40(c)(1)(iii): Services to Pregnant Women 1304.40(f) (1): Parent Involvement in Mental Health Education 1304.40(f) (4)(i-iii): Mental Health Education Program 1304.52(j)(iii): Mental Wellness Information to Staff 1308.19: Children with Disabilities; Developing IEP’s
2. Roles/responsibilities of teaching and other staff in working with the mental health consultant	1304.20(a)1(i-iv): Screening and Obtain Further Testing 1304.20(b)1: Screening for Developmental, Sensory and Behavioral Concerns 1304.20(b)2: Direct Guidance on Screening from Consultant 1304.20(b)(3): Multiple Sources of Information on Child’s Development 1304.20(c) (1): Communication with Parents and Follow-up 1304.20(d): Ongoing Care and Observation 1304.20(e)(1-5): Parent Involvement in Child’s Care 1304.21 (a-c): Support Social and Emotional Development 1304.24(a) (1)(i-vi): Collaboration with Parents 1304.41(a)1: Community Partnerships/Information Sharing 1304.41(a)(2)(ii) Community Mental Health Services Providers 1308.19: Children with Disabilities; Developing IEP’s
3. Governance/organizational role and composition of the Mental Health Workgroup	1304.41(b): Advisory Committees

4. Hiring or contracting the mental health consultant	1304.24(a)(2-3): Schedule and Frequency of Consultation 1304.52(d)(4): Licensure, Certification, Experience
5. Monitoring and accountability for consultation services	1304.51(g): Record Keeping Systems 1304.51(h)(1-2): Reporting Systems 1304.51(i)(2): Program Self-Assessment and Monitoring 1304.52(a)(2)(ii-iii) Organizational Structure/Management 1304.52(h)(1)(i-iv) Standards of Conduct/Contracts 1304.52(i) Performance Appraisals
6. Supervision of the mental health consultant	1304.52(h)(1)(i-iv): Standards of Conduct 1304.52(i)(2): Staff Performance Appraisals
7. Mental health strategic plan initiatives	1304.24: Child Mental Health Services Vision 1304.51(a) (1)(i-iii): Program Planning 1304.52(a)(2)(ii-iii): Program and Services Management
8. Confidentiality issues related to the mental health consultant	1304.22(b)(3): Confidentiality Policy/Information Sharing 1304.41(a) (1): Community Partnerships/Information Sharing 1304.51(g): Record Keeping 1304.52(h)(1)(i-iv): Standards of Conduct
9. Referrals and relationships with external/community agencies for mental health services/supports	1304.40(b)(1): Accessing Community Services/Resources 1304.41(a) (1): Community Partnerships/Information Sharing 1304.41(a) (2) (ii): Community Mental Health Services Providers
10. Involvement in transition planning for children	1304.41(c) (1)(ii): Transitions and Communication

Office of Head Start (2009). Head Start Program Performance Standards, 45 CFR, Chapter XIII 10-1-09 Edition. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Retrieved from

http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/Head%20Start%20Requirements/45%20CFR%20Chapter%20XIII/45%20CFR%20Chap%20XIII_ENG.pdf