Home Visits & Family Conferences

GENERAL PLAN / APPROACH:

Family engagement is an integral component of Head Start. We recognize parents as their children’s primary teacher. One of the ways this occurs is through home visits and family conferences. Head Start teachers are required to make two visits to the home of each child; one is the initial home visit and the other at a family conference. In addition, there are two to three more family conferences, which typically are held at the center. However, these conferences may occur in the family’s home or another agreed upon location.

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PROCEDURE:

Family / Teacher Contact #1 - INITIAL HOME VISIT (IHV)

Before Home Visit:

1. Read the entire child file (both Paper and Electronic). Include all of the following on the Initial Home Visit form (gathered below):
   - Any referrals
   - A current IFSP or any other counseling services
   - Primary Language spoken in the home
   - Any other relevant information, including past years in EHS and / or Head Start

2. Complete 1st staffing with Family Advocate and document in electronic database (Shine).

3. Gather appropriate forms:
   - Initial Home Visit Form (Purple form)
o Home Language Survey from TS Gold

- ASQ-3 Screening (not required for returning Head Start students and children on an IFSP).
- ASQ-SE Screening (not required for returning Head Start students).
- ASQ Green Summary Form and Articulation Screening (not used for children on an IFSP).

  - Children on an IFSP use the Blue Summary Form and bring a copy of the IFSP to the home visit to review goals with the family.

- Copy of Daily Schedule – Give a brief description of an average Head Start/Early Head Start day. Talk about family-style meals, and bottle feeding of infants (if applicable). Discuss Safe Sleep practices for infants (if applicable).

- Schedule / share orientation day(s) and time(s).

- Emergency Form – **Must be completed before the child may begin school.**

- Camera: to take a photo of child to upload into Shine, and family pictures for displays in class.

- Appropriate toys/activities for child and siblings for visit and ASQ Kit (supplies).

4. Schedule Initial Home Visit with family (request an interpreter as needed).

5. **If the child is entering the program mid-year, this visit needs to be completed within two weeks of the child’s enrollment.** If possible, complete visit before child begins class.

  - Complete Purple form and Conference Form Template to ensure Child Goals are completed with family.

  - Enter into Shine as Initial HV **and** Conference if enrolled 3 or less weeks before a checkpoint or 3 weeks after a Checkpoint has occurred.

  - Paper forms to be put into Child File.

**Required activities during Home Visit:**

1. Before leaving the center, sign out in the Destination Log. Include the time you left, name of the family, and time of return. If your plans change, remember to notify the
center. If home visit occurs after the center has closed, please contact your Area Manager after the visit is complete.

2. Complete Initial Home Visit form (Purple).
3. Complete the Home Language Survey from My Teaching Strategies. Return form to Area Assistant to be data entered into My Teaching Strategies. If child is identified as a Dual Language Learner, the Area Assistant will set My Teaching Strategies to assess the child in Spanish language and literacy.
4. Discuss and review the Daily Classroom Schedule; Discuss Staggered Start for Head Start families.
5. Complete ASQ and ASQ/SE if applicable.
6. Ensure emergency form is complete and signed by the parent.
7. Take a photo of the child to upload into Shine, and any additional photos for classroom displays.
8. Discuss My Teaching Strategies. Encourage Head Start families to accept an invitation from the teacher to create an account in My Teaching Strategies or to refer to their account if they have one from previous years.

Follow Up Documentation:

1. Document Home visit in Shine:
   a. Education Tab>Home Visit
      i. Display Name: Initial Home Visit
      ii. Date Home Visit Occurred
      iii. Location of visit (e.g., Family Home)
      iv. Check mark if Father Figure was present/involved
      v. Notes: include brief note for your reference (e.g., mom, grandma, and grandpa present. Completed ASQ and ASQ-SE. No concerns).
   b. Upload/Attach Initial Home Visit from into Shine
2. Complete ASQ & ASQ SE scoring, complete Green Summary Form.
3. Submit to Area Assistant to upload into Shine.
4. Input all paper forms into Child File.
5. Send Head Start Families the invitation through My Teaching Strategies.
6. Add relevant observations into My Teaching Strategies observed in the home and gathered through the ASQs.

Considerations (please read prior to the home visit):

- The goal of first home visit is to build partnerships and relationships. This visit is a time to reinforce the family as the child’s first and primary teacher. The family is the senior partner in the relationship. The partnership focuses on school readiness.

- This visit is an opportunity for the teacher to learn from the family about the child’s strengths, interests and needs, and the family’s goal for their child’s school experience.
Ask any relevant questions based on the file review. Visit should be an hour in length. Initial home visits, which include the ASQ screening, may take up to an hour and a half. Be on time. (Mention the time you need to leave at the beginning of the visit.) Remember, you are a representative of the Agency. Be professional and appropriate. Sit near the family member, but not between the child and the family member. Speak with enthusiasm and in a positive, accepting manner.

If an interpreter is needed, remember the conversation is still between you and the family member.

If at any time during a home visit you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, calmly leave immediately.

As you begin to fill out the forms, discuss with the family how this information is used to support development of the curriculum and individualization for their child. This information also will contribute to the first checkpoint.

All forms become part of the child’s file.

The Home Visit form is to be completed in English.

**Family / Teacher Conferences**

Each family will receive 3 Family Conferences, and Duration Classes will receive a 4th Family Conference.

A minimum of 1 Family Conference is required to be completed in the family’s home.

Required activities are:

1. Schedule Family Conference with the family.
2. The goal of subsequent home visits (Family Conference in the home) is to continue building the partnerships and relationships. This visit is for both the family and teacher to share information about the child and the progress the child has made. **This is a time to celebrate the child and his / her efforts and accomplishments.**
3. The visit/conference should be an hour in length. **Do not schedule visits/conferences too closely together.**
4. Remember to sign out in the destination log when going to the family’s home.
5. The information that should be completed and shared on the Family Conference Form are the Strengths listed in all Domains in the top two boxes.
6. For families that have a home language other than English, the conference form is to be done in English first and then translated.
7. It is essential families share their observations and input. Discuss My Teaching Strategies Family Central for Head Start. Encourage Head Start families who do not have an account to accept an invitation from the teacher to create an account.
8. Add any family comments in each of the three sections of the family conference form.
9. Then, you and the Family will develop and record specific plans for their child. The plan should include individualized school readiness goals. These goals should be...
developed to meet the child at his / her development level. The plans include home and school activities. Remember, the IFSP goals and Child Guidance Plans have identified the needs of the child; these also should be considered in the Family Conference Plan.

10. After completing the Family Conference Form, the teacher and the family member will sign both copies of the form. One copy will be left with the family, and the other copy will be placed in the child's file. Early Head Start families will review, update, and sign the Individual Care Schedule at this time.

11. The Conference is documented in Shine, including the location (home or center).

12. Goals and parent feedback will be added to the conference form and saved on My Teaching Strategies.

13. After the Conference is complete, send any relevant activities and materials from My Teaching Strategies to the family.

14. Materials to bring to the visit:
   a. Portfolio/Work Sample or photo of child engaged in classroom activity
   b. Family Conference form
   c. Toys and activities
   d. Development and Learning Report for setting child goals (and any other relevant data)
   e. Family Progress Report

   For the final Family Conference list activities to do over the summer to support plans for the child. For children transitioning from EHS to HS or from HS to Kindergarten or into another program, list transition activities and what school they will attend next year. Share with the families what is in the school record.