

Sweetwater County School District #1 Head Start Family Home Visits & Conference Procedure

Family engagement is an integral component of Head Start. One of the ways this occurs is through our home visits and family conferences. Head Start teachers are required to make two visits to the home of each child, as well as two family conferences each year. (Head Start Performance Standard 1302.34(b)). This includes the initial home visit before the program year begins or the student begins school. The first parent teacher conference will occur in the Fall. A second home visit and parent teacher conference occur after the Spring checkpoints are completed.

Family/Teacher Contact #1-Initial Home Visit

Required Activities Are:

- Read entire child file. Is there a referral, current IEP or any other services?
- Complete 1st meeting with Family Advocate.
- Schedule initial home visit with family.
- Goal of 1st 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 goals for their child's school experience.
- Ask any relevant questions based on the file review. Visit should be an hour in length. Do not schedule visits too tightly. Be on time. (Mention the time you need to leave at the beginning of the visit.) Remember you are a representative of the SCSD#1 Head Start. 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, leave immediately.**
- Before leaving the center, you must provide your supervisor of your home visit schedule. You must inform them of the time you are leaving, name and address of the family and your expected time of return. If your plans change remember to notify your supervisor. If home visit occurs after center has closed, please contact your supervisor after visit is complete.
- As you begin to fill out the forms, discuss with the family how this information is used to support development of curriculum and individualization for their child. This information will also contribute to the first checkpoint.
- Materials to bring to the visit are:
 1. Initial home visit form and agenda.
 2. Agreement Form.
 3. Copy of daily schedule-give a brief description of the preschool day. Talk about meals.
 4. Calendar-explain the services we offer for both the child and family.
 5. Child Release form – Must be completed before child begins school.
 6. Share orientation day and time.
 7. All forms become part of child's file.
 8. Information from some of these forms are to be entered in ChildPlus.
 9. School Readiness Goals.
 10. Curriculum explanation.

If the child is entering mid-year, this visit needs to be completed within two weeks of the child's enrollment. This visit needs to be complete before child begins class.

Family/Teacher Contact #2 and #4 -Parent Teacher Conferences

- Parent Teacher conferences will be held at the center unless it is convenient/or necessary for the visit to occur at the home.
- Schedule Parent Teacher conference with the family.
- Visits should be approximately twenty minutes to a half hour. Do not schedule to close together.
- Review the Child Observation Report (COR).
- Add family comments and their assessment of their child in the comments box on the back of the COR.
- Then, you and the family will develop and record specific plans for their child. The plan should incorporate school readiness. The plans include home and school activities. Remember the IEP goals and the COR report have identified needs of the child.
- Materials needed:
 - COR Report
 - VMI
 - DAP
 - Cutting and name sample
 - In-kind information
 - Family Conference form
 - Any additional materials relevant to student

Family/Teacher Contact #3 – 2nd Home Visit

Required Activities Are:

- Schedule 2nd home visit with family.
- Goal of 2nd home visit 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 their efforts and accomplishments. Visit should be approximately 45 minutes in length. Do not schedule visit too closely together.
- Remember to provide your supervisor with a schedule before leaving.
- Review the COR Report and any additional materials relevant to student.
- Add family comments and their assessment of their child in the comments box.
- Then, you and the family will develop and record specific plans for their child. The plan should incorporate school readiness goals. The plans should include home and school activities. Remember the IEP goals and the COR report have identified needs of the child.
- After completing the Family Conference Form, one copy will be left with the family and the other copy will be placed in the child's file.
- After the home visit is complete, send any relevant activities and materials from the Child Observation Report to the family.
- Materials to bring to visit:
 - COR Report
 - VMI
 - DAP
 - Cutting and sample
 - In-kind information
 - Family Conference form
 - Any additional materials relevant to student

Teacher/Family Initial Home Visit

Name of Child: _____

Date: _____

Family Member Name: _____

Staff Member Name: _____

The purpose of this visit is to get to know the child and family and obtain information to better reflect the child's home life in daily curriculum. Please try to include the child and all relevant family members. Be sensitive to the family's agenda. Be clear and share how this information will be used. Begin with introductions and explanation of our SCSD#1 Head Start's philosophy of reflecting children's lives within our daily curriculum. Explain what the child's school day will look like and how this information will help the education staff individualize for their child.

These questions should serve as a "script" for the teacher when visiting with families.

1. Ask the parent to describe a typical day for their child? (Example: what time does he/she wake up, go to bed, do you have a story time during the day?) _____

2. Give the family a copy of the class daily schedule and routine. Ask how do you think your child will do with this schedule? _____

3. Ask what they see as your child's strengths. Ask is your child shy, outgoing, adventurous? _____

4. Ask if the child has attended in the past any schools or childcare centers in the past. Ask: how did their child get along with other children and how did/will he/she respond to being away from them? _____

5. Explain our outdoor environment and field trip procedures and the importance of knowing if the child stays with groups or runs. Ask, when playing outside or on a family trip, will child stay with the group? _____

6. Ask: when child has difficulty listening, following rules, etc., and they feel guidance or discipline is needed, what seems to work for the child? _____

7. _____ (Check if family indicated on Student Inventory form that child was potty trained.) If so, ask: What terms do you use for bowel movements and urination? Explain that you need to speak the same toileting language at school as at home to best help the child be successful.

Develop a plan for school that is similar to home potty learning routine. Request a supply of fresh clothes to be on hand at the center.

8. Review with Family Advocate prior to visit. During visit ask: have there been any changes in your family life in the past year? (Marriage, divorce, births, deaths, moving to a new home, etc.). Explain this information is important to know so you can be aware of the child's feelings and support him/her.

9. Ask: Are there any areas you can see your child would need assistance with? (Example: moving from one activity to another, handling feelings or stress, sharing, etc.).

Ask: If the child is on an IEP (or parent indicates other concerns), what additional information/skills do you feel might be needed by staff?

Ask: What support is necessary to meet your child's needs? That could be therapy, consultants, adaptations, modifications, services/equipment, the person/agency providing the service as indicated on the child's IEP.

Ask: Do you feel any services need to be tailored to meet your child's needs while attending SCSD#1 Head Start?

10. Ask what arrangements they have made for transportation for their child to and from school? Ask if they have filled out a bus request if needed. (Discuss with family as needed that we have limited busing.)

11. Explain that family input into children's daily curriculum is very important to SCSD#1 Head Start staff. We want information from all parents to plan meaningful activities for your child. Reflecting children's lives in our classroom and planned activities helps children make adjustment to school. Ask what the primary language of the child is.

12. Ask: What people are important to your child?

13. Ask: What are some important events that your family might celebrate? What do you do with your child for fun?

14. Field trips and class visitors are an important part of our curriculum. Do any members of your family have any interests, cultures, jobs, etc. they would like to share with the children?

15. Explain the procedure of the Emergency Authorization form and the Child Release Form for their child at the center and for the bus. (Who may pick up, are there any restraining orders, etc.). Explain the importance of updating pertinent information, changes of phone numbers, addresses, contact people, etc., and what the process is for changing information. Any change of plans needs to be written with a note to the center.

16. Explain what In-kind is and how it affects our program.
