

HEAD START COMMUNITY PROGRAM OF MORRIS COUNTY, INC.

Child Physical and Dental Examination Policy

Head Start Community Program of Morris County, Inc. follows Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) best practice standards for children's preventive health services. In accordance with Head Start Performance Standard 1304.20(a), the State of New Jersey Child Care Licensing Regulation 10:122.7.3, and the New Jersey Department of Human Services Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services, each child must have physical and dental examinations on an age-appropriate schedule.

Recommended EPSDT exam schedules are at the following ages: newborn, under 6 weeks, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 24 months, and annually thereafter. Prior to entering school each year, every child shall have had a health examination performed by a health care provider within six months prior to admission for children who are 2½ years of age or younger; or one year prior to admission, for children above 2½ years of age, with an annual physical thereafter.

Dental examination should take place initially at one year of age, with a comprehensive dental examination annually beginning at age three, and preventative dental care every six months thereafter.

Parents are hereby informed that all Head Start and Early Head Start children MUST undergo a physical prior to entering school and, beginning at age three, have dental examinations every six months.

It is Head Start's policy to offer assistance to children and families in obtaining the mandated exams. We therefore will assist parents in finding a medical home for children by providing information about sources of low-cost medical and dental care and by providing financial and other types of assistance, if necessary. However, since parents are their children's primary caregivers, it is ultimately the parents' responsibility to ensure that their children receive the required examinations and other necessary medical/dental care.

Prior to enrollment, or within 30 calendar days after the first day the child attends Head Start or Early Head Start, documentation of a health and dental examination performed within the year prior to the first day of attendance in the program must be submitted to the Head Start Health Office.

Parents will be sent written reminders of this requirement as follows:

- Notice prior to the opening of school.
- Reminder will be sent 20 days prior to the 30-day deadline.

- Reminder will be sent 10 days prior to the 30-day deadline.
- The day prior to the 30-day deadline, parents will be notified that their child will not be able to return to school until evidence of mandated health and dental examinations by a health professional have been submitted to the Health Office.

Once the 30-day deadline has passed, teachers will not be permitted to accept children who have not had their required examinations into the classroom. Only when documentation of these examinations is submitted to the Health Office will the child be accepted into the classroom.