

EARLY HEAD START TIP SHEET

No. 33

Home Visits & Families with Multiple EHS Children

If a family has more than one child enrolled in the EHS home-based program, is a home-visit required for each child?

Response:

No. The program provides, at a minimum, one 90-minute home-visit per week for the family. The home visitor and the parents however, must plan together to ensure that each child's needs are being addressed in on-going efforts. Programs may provide lengthier or additional home-visits as needed to address specific issues and/or to ensure that all of the children are being served.

Child focused

In some cases, for short periods of time, a family may need to focus on one child's needs more specifically. An example is when a family has both a newborn and a toddler. Frequently, the visits may focus on caring for a very young baby. However, the home-visitor continues to integrate the other child(ren) into the discussions and activities although they may focus more on a particular child. The home-visitor might ask how the new baby affects the other child(ren) and family; and/or discuss with the parents how daily schedules or activities can be altered for the differing developmental stages and ages of the children.

Questions to Consider for Planning and Programming:

- How does the program ensure that the home-visit plans are individualized for each child in the program? Within a family?
- How does the home-visitor integrate each of the children's needs/progress into discussions and/or activities?
- What systems are in place allowing the program/home-visitor flexibility in adding time or visits as needed?
- What systems are in place allowing the program flexibility in adjusting home visitors' caseloads to ensure that each child and each family receives appropriate services?

Performance Standards, Title 45, Code of Federal Regulations:

- 1306.33(a)(5) Grantees implementing a home-based program option must maintain an average caseload of 10 – 12 families per home visitor with a maximum of 12 families for any individual.
- 1306.33(a)(1) Grantees implementing a home-based program option must provide one home visit per week per family lasting for a minimum of 1 and ½ hours each.
- 1306.33(b) Home visits must be conducted by trained home visitors with the content of the home visit jointly planned by the home visitor and the parents. Home visitor must conduct the home visit with the participation of parents. Home visits may not be conducted by the home visitor with only baby-sitters or other temporary caregivers in attendance.

- 1306.33(b)(1) The purpose of the home visit is to help parents improve their parenting skills and to assist them in the use of the home as the child's primary learning environment. The home visitor must work with the parents to help them provide learning opportunities that enhance their child's growth and development.

Resources:

Early Head Start Program Strategies: Socializations for Infants and Toddlers in the Home-Based Program Option. DHHS/ACF/HSB. 2001.
<http://www.ehsnrc.org/pdffiles/EHSProgramStrategies.pdf>.

Early Head Start Home-based Program Option: Recruiting, Training, and Retraining High Quality Staff. Technical Assistance Paper No. 2. DHHS/ACF/HSB. 1999.
http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Program%20Design%20and%20Management/Management%20and%20Administration/Human%20Resources/Staff%20Qualifications/intodd_pub_00030a_071305.html

“Early Head Start Home-Based Services.” **Early Head Start Research to Practice.** DHHS/ACF/OPRE. 2006. Retrieved October 9, 2008 from
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/ehs/ehs_resrch/reports/homebase_services/homebase_services.pdf

Home Visitor's Handbook for the Head Start Home-Based Program Option. DHHS/ACF/HSB. 2004. http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/resources/ECLKC_Bookstore/Home-Visitor's%20Handbook%20for%20the%20Head%20Start%20Home-Based%20Program%20Option.htm

Information Memorandum ACYF-IM-HS-OO-22: Child Development Services During Home Visits and Socializations in Early Head Start Home-Based Program Options. DHHS/ACF/HSB. 2000.
http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/ecdh/eecd/Learning%20Environments/Program%20Options/infants_intodd_ime_00035a1_080205.html

Program Administrator's Checklist for the Head Start Home-Based Program Option. DHHS/ACF/HSB. 2004.
http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/ecdh/Disabilities/Program%20Planning/Disabilities%20Service%20Plan/intodd_pub_00034a_080205.html

Home-Based Supervisor's Manual. DHHS/ACF/HSB. 2004.
http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Program%20Design%20and%20Management/Management%20and%20Administration/Human%20Resources/Leadership%20%26%20Supervision/intodd_pub_00033a_080205.html

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This Tip Sheet is not a regulatory document. Its intent is to provide a basis for dialogue, clarification, and problem solving among Office of Head Start, Regional Offices, TA consultants, and grantees. If you need further clarification on Head Start Policies and regulations, please contact your Regional Program Specialist.