

CHAPTER 3

Health Topic Self-Reflection Checklists

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Managing health services means knowing and understanding the details of health service delivery. Head Start health services involve a wide range of activities.

Head Start Program Performance Standards

The Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) are the regulations that guide all of your

work. There are over 100 individual standards related to health in the HSPPS. They are found in each section of the regulations. Each of the standards defines the scope of work for your program.

For more information on the Head Start Program Performance Standards, go to <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/hspss>.

To help you with your work, this guide brings the health-related HSPPS together in one place. It organizes them in 7 health priority areas:



- Physical Health
- Oral Health
- Safe Environments
- Healthy Active Living
- Mental Health
- Family and Community Engagement
- Staff Health



As a health manager, you need to know and understand how to meet the standards in all of your health activities. This is accomplished in a number of ways including:

- Program planning
- Coordinating with other service areas
- Becoming a health leader
- Working together with your Head Start program's systems

The key is to remember that you are not alone. Many people work with you to accomplish these

tasks. This guide was developed to assist you in your work.

The first step is to get a basic idea of what your tasks are and what you need to do. The self-reflection checklists will

help you do this. Complete each checklist. This will help you figure out what health services activities or tasks you need to do first.

Do not worry if you first go through the checklists and find yourself checking “unknown.” This is part of the process. The information at the end of this section will help you figure out what you need to do next.

The Health Topics: Delving Deeper section will also go into greater detail to help you find out what you need to know, who can help, and what to do next.

Time-Sensitive Tasks

One of the first things to do is to figure out if time-sensitive tasks are being completed in your program(s). Although most activities are ongoing, some tasks must be completed within the first 45 or 90 days of a child's enrollment [45 CFR 1304.20] except as noted below.*

More detailed information on these tasks can be found in the Health Topics: Delving Deeper section. It is important to figure out where your program stands on these tasks because of the limited number of days you have to complete them.

- According to [45 CFR 1304.20(a)(2)] “Grantee and delegate agencies operating programs of shorter durations (90 days or less) must complete the above processes... within 30 calendar days from the child's entry into the program.

Ask yourself the following as you look at each chart below:

- Does my program(s) have current policies and procedures in place?
- Has/have the task(s) been completed?

Refer to the columns in the chart as you think about each task:

Policy & procedures are in place and up-to-date: This means that you know the policy, it is in place and being used, and does not need revision for this program year.

Policy & procedures need revision: This means you know this policy, but either it needs to be updated for this program year

or it does not reflect what currently happens or needs to happen. Or, it can mean that the process is not working.

Unknown: You have not found information on this policy or procedure and might need

to ask others in your program for information. Or, you do not know because you have not had time.

Task complete: Policy and procedures are in place and the task is currently complete.

Time-Sensitive Tasks Self-Reflection Checklist

| Tasks | Policy & procedures are in place & up to date | Policy & procedures need revision | Unknown | Task is complete |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------|------------------|
| <p>Physical Health Task 2: Ensure that each child receives age-appropriate and culturally and linguistically responsive screening for developmental, sensory (visual and auditory), behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, perceptual, and emotional skills. (45 calendar days*)</p> | | | | |
| <p>Physical Health Task 1: In partnership with parents or legal guardians, determine the child's health status and support families in accessing treatment and follow-up services for identified health conditions. (90 calendar days*)</p> | | | | |
| <p>Oral Health Task 1: In partnership with parents or legal guardians, determine the child's oral health status and support families in accessing treatment and follow-up services for identified health conditions. (90 calendar days*)</p> | | | | |

Physical Health

When children are physically healthy it is easier for them to grow, learn, and succeed. By keeping children on a schedule of well-child care, health care providers can help children to be physically healthy and ready to learn.

Building on education and family services, your program's daily activities help to promote physical health and identify concerns. These activities help to identify and address health concerns that might make it more difficult for a child to participate, grow, and learn from the opportunities offered by your Head Start program.

Physical Health Self-Reflection Checklist

| Tasks | Policy & procedures are in place & up to date | Policy & procedures need revision | Unknown | Task is complete |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------|------------------|
| In partnership with parents or legal guardians, determine the child's health status, make referrals, and support families in accessing treatment and follow-up services for identified health conditions. (Note: This task is also listed in the time-sensitive list above.) | | | | |
| Ensure that each child receives age-appropriate and culturally and linguistically responsive screening for developmental, sensory (visual and auditory), behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, perceptual and emotional skills. (Note: This task is also listed in the time-sensitive list above.) | | | | |
| Conduct and record periodic observations of each child's developmental progress, changes in physical appearance, and emotional and behavioral patterns to identify any new or recurring medical, dental, or developmental concerns. | | | | |
| Develop procedures to track child health status, including screening, examinations/evaluations, treatment, follow-up, and ongoing health. | | | | |

Safe Environments

Children need clean, well-maintained environments to stay healthy and safe. Injury and illness can lead to missed school days, lack of focus, challenging behaviors, and delays in meeting

school readiness goals. They can also cause severe physical and emotional trauma or death.

To create safe environments, programs have policies, procedures, and education plans that support injury- and illness-free spaces.

Safe Environments Self-Reflection Checklist

| Tasks | Policy & procedures are in place & up to date | Policy & procedures need revision | Unknown | Task is complete |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------|------------------|
| Prevent illness by maintaining healthy environments. | | | | |
| Prevent childhood injuries by identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect and implementing injury prevention strategies. | | | | |
| Provide education for staff, volunteers, children, and families on injury prevention practices. | | | | |
| Conduct inspections of all facility, equipment, and materials used by the program to ensure compliance with federal, tribal, state, and local licensing, certification, and regulation requirements. | | | | |
| Develop, practice, and use emergency plans. | | | | |

Oral Health

Oral health is an important part of a child’s health and a pregnant woman’s overall health and well-being. It also plays a key role in making sure that children are ready to learn when they start school. Head Start programs can promote oral health; prevent and treat oral diseases; and improve overall health for children and pregnant women.

To promote optimal oral health for children and pregnant women enrolled in your Head Start program, oral health policies and procedures need to be in place. Programs also need plans for educational activities to promote oral health for children and pregnant women.

Oral Health Self-Reflection Checklist

| Tasks | Policy & procedures are in place & up to date | Policy & procedures need revision | Unknown | Task is complete |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------|------------------|
| In partnership with parents or legal guardians, determine the oral health status. | | | | |
| Ensure children and families receive treatment and follow-up of needs identified in oral examinations. | | | | |
| Provide oral health education to Head Start staff, families, pregnant women, and children. | | | | |
| Develop oral health promotion and prevention activities. | | | | |

Healthy Active Living

Healthy active living is important! Research tells us that the way young children eat and move can affect their weight now and in the future.^{1,2} Early childhood is an ideal time to start healthy habits.

The following tasks will help you develop policies, procedures, and plans to support your program's nutrition services and physical activity.

Healthy Active Living Self-Reflection Checklist

| Tasks | Policy & procedures are in place & up to date | Policy & procedures need revision | Unknown | Task is complete |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|---------|------------------|
| Partner with families to: (1) provide individualized culturally and linguistically responsive nutrition assessments for children and (counseling if needed) for pregnant women, (2) develop program menus with family input, (3) meet USDA nutrition requirements, and (4) implement and/or support family-style meals. | | | | |
| Provide nutrition education for families and staff. | | | | |
| Include children with special health care needs (including special dietary needs). | | | | |
| Provide developmentally appropriate daily physical and motor activity for all children. | | | | |

Mental Health

Mental health helps people positively engage with the world. The relationships that your staff build with children and families create a nurturing environment for children. When children have positive relationships and can express their emotions appropriately, they are better able to explore and learn.

Promoting the mental health of young children and their families has been a key part of Head Start since it started. Your role as health manager is to work with the mental health staff and/or consultants and other team members to create and maintain a plan that promotes the mental health of each child, family, and staff member.

Mental Health Self-Reflection Checklist

| Tasks | Policy & procedures are in place & up to date | Policy & procedures need revision | Unknown | Task is complete |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------|------------------|
| Support children's social and emotional development in partnership with members of your program's management team. | | | | |
| Work with the mental health manager, specialist, and/or consultant to partner with families in mental health services. | | | | |
| Secure the services of a mental health professional or professionals. | | | | |
| Assist pregnant women in accessing mental health interventions and follow-up care. | | | | |

Family and Community Engagement

Families come to programs with diverse experiences, cultures, and knowledge about health and child development. You engage families when you listen to, acknowledge, and support their values, preferences, and needs. Head Start has always viewed the family as a child's

first teacher and advocate. When you make sure health services are built on families' ideals for their children's health and well-being, you help families find ways to meet their own needs.

The tasks below help to make sure that health services are a team approach and that health messages are part of your ongoing work with families and the community.

Family and Community Engagement Self-Reflection Checklist

| Tasks | Policy & procedures are in place & up to date | Policy & procedures need revision | Unknown | Task is complete |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------|------------------|
| Support and engage families as they identify their own health strengths, needs, and interests through an assessment and goal-setting processes. | | | | |
| Ensure that families benefit from access to the community health services and resources. | | | | |
| Provide ongoing family engagement and health education opportunities based on the expressed needs and interests of families as individuals and group members and/or the assessed needs of their child. | | | | |
| Assist pregnant women and expectant families enrolled in Early Head Start (EHS) to access comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care. | | | | |

Staff Health

Your program staff create a stimulating, nurturing, and safe environment for the children and families they serve. Staff may include health professionals/paraprofessionals, educators, family service workers, facilities personnel, nutrition and meal service staff, or transportation staff.

They may also include volunteers who provide direct support to children and families.

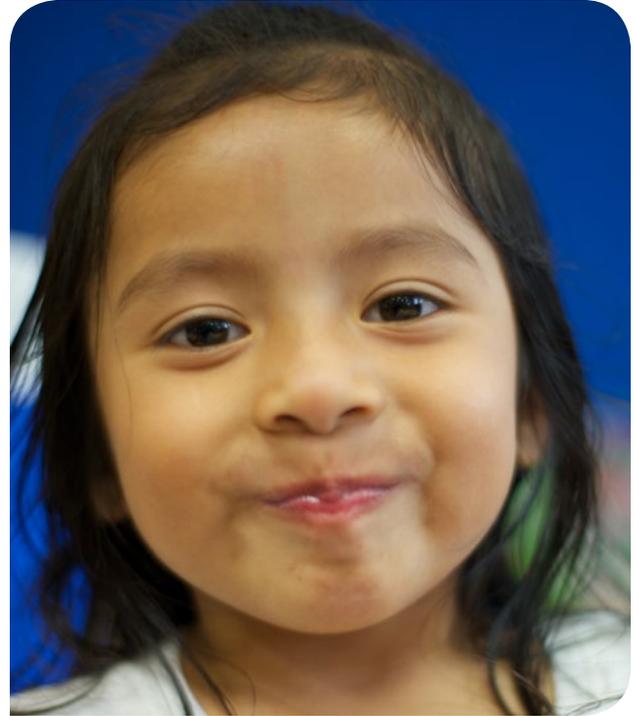
To meet their many responsibilities, staff members must be at their best physically and emotionally. The tasks below help to make sure that your staff members are healthy, safe, and supported.

Staff Health Self-Reflection Checklist

| Tasks | Policy & procedures are in place & up to date | Policy & procedures need revision | Unknown | Task is complete |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------|------------------|
| Develop a schedule of professional development and staff support regarding (1) sanitation, hygiene, standard precautions, and injury prevention; and (2) mental health. | | | | |
| Ensure all staff members and volunteers have initial and current health examinations that include screening for tuberculosis (TB) and periodic reexaminations as recommended by their health care provider or mandates by state, tribal, or local laws. Volunteers must also be screened for TB in accordance with state, tribal, or local laws (or as recommended by the HSAC). | | | | |
| Provide a healthy, safe, and accessible environment for staff. | | | | |

What Next?

After you have completed the self-reflection checklists as best as you can, your next step is to go to the Health Topics: Delving Deeper and Key Tasks sections of this guide. The content in these sections will help you figure out what to do next. It will help you develop a plan and find information and will give you strategies for prioritizing what needs to be done.



References

1. National Research Council. (2011). *Early Childhood Obesity Prevention Policies*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.
2. Dattilo AM, Birch L, Krebs NF, Lake A, Taveras EM, Saavedra JM. Need for early interventions in the prevention of pediatric overweight: A review and upcoming directions. *J Obes*. 2012; Article ID 123023.