

Family Well-Being Checks

Head Start Performance Standards

§ 1302.34 (b) (2) (6)

§ 1302.41 (a)

§ 1302.46

§ 1302.50 (a) (b) (2) (3) (5)

Policy

- Documentation of family contact will be precise, concise, and factual.
- Information provided in the ChildPlus record will form a comprehensive narrative which includes family history, current status of family configuration, health and developmental status, identifiable strengths and needs and any other factors affecting the child and family participation in the Head Start/Early Head Start program.
- Family Services Teachers have primary responsibility to attempt to make at least one family contact/entry of substance communication per month to reflect communication between school and home. During these contacts, staff will develop positive goal-oriented relationships with parents/guardians and structure services to encourage trust and respectful, ongoing two-way communication between staff and parents/guardians. Document these communications in ChildPlus in the Family Services module using the Family Well-Being Checks event type and add notes in any other module as it relates and appropriate.
- Family Services Teachers will use the **Family Well-Being Checks Guide and Prompts** document as a support to help them understand what areas they should be covering in their communications with families.
- Family Services Teachers will become familiar with the following handouts to increase their positive goal-oriented relationship skills with families: [Positive Goal-Oriented Relationships](#) and [Guide to Developing Relationships with families](#) from **ECLKC website**.
- Duration Assistant Teacher assist and coordinate with Family Services Teacher to provide follow-up or complete the well-being checks monthly based on family's needs with the intention to avoid duplication of services and support.

Procedures

Family Contacts/Family Well-Being Checks

- Starting in October (or, for later enrollees, as soon as the child enrolls in the program), family contacts/Family Well-Being Checks will begin. Family contacts are opportunities to develop relationships with parents/guardians, check on the well-being of the family and offer resources as appropriate. These family contacts may include discussions about services and resources that support family well-being, including family safety, health, nutrition, children's developmental stages, transportation, medical or dental needs, economic stability, and follow up on their family goals. In addition, staff can invite parents/guardians to incorporate their culture, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds of their family in the classroom.

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- Introduce Family Well-Being Checks during the registration process, explain what to expect from when you call and set a monthly recurring schedule if possible. In addition, contact the family at least one week prior to the intended date for the 1st well-being check to confirm set schedule is still convenient for the family. Well-being checks will be scheduled during the Teacher's office hours Staff are not *required* to offer well-being checks outside of the standard workday.
- Well-being checks are scheduled for at least 15 minutes making sure that the time is mutually convenient for staff and family members.
- Use the **Family Well-Being Checks Guide and Prompts** to help guide the conversation with each family.
- Use conversation style of communication to find out what is going well for the family and what are some areas that they could use support with. Using conversation style, begin to build your resources to offer the family as well as any referrals to other programs if needed. Use positive language to celebrate milestones they are sharing.
- It is important to have meaningful conversations around the child's health and wellbeing. Please see health P&P's for reference on requirements and screenings. Use health prompts to follow up on health requirements and screenings.
- Family goals are set with the family during the 1st conference. While reviewing the Family Partnership Agreement with the family document any progress they have made since working on this goal. Document any barriers or resources they have requested to help complete this goal. Celebrate with them their mini goal steps!
- It is important for staff to actively listen to emerging needs during these interactions with families as needs for information, referrals and resources may be expressed. After the well-being check is completed, summarize the outcome in ChildPlus in a summary paragraph including any significant successes, ongoing issues, or concerns for the child and/or family. In the Family Services Module, select *Add Event* and select **Family Well-Being Checks**. Record all well-being checks as an *add action* and include a summary paragraph in the notes as described above. See full, detailed instructions on data entry in the ChildPlus Training Portal.
- In addition to the Family Well-Being Check event, document updates to specific events in the appropriate component module (e.g., if you discussed a need identified or dental exam, document additional actions under those events). See ChildPlus Portal for specific instructions for documentation.
- If the family has increasing needs, several needs not easily remedied by resources or referral, is experiencing barriers accessing or receiving services or is currently in crisis, this family will benefit from extra support and follow up. Have conversations about the situation at the next Weekly Family Update meeting to develop ideas for how best to support the family. See **Duration Weekly Family Updates Policy and Procedure** for more information.
- Reference the ChildPlus portal for questions regarding ChildPlus documentation of health requirements.
- If a parent/guardian has **more than one child in either Early Head Start and/or Head Start**, staff will collaborate and coordinate accordingly during Siblings Family Services Check-Ins to ensure they are not duplicating services and supports. See **Siblings Family Services Check-Ins Policy and Procedure** for more information.
- If there is a family who refuses to participate in well-being checks, the staff should notify their Program Area Supervisor immediately and document as appropriate in the Family Well-Being Check event as part of the meeting summary in the actions section.
- Family well-being checks can be combined with home visits and conferences upon the family and classroom staff availability. When this occurs, staff is required to document both requirements as

Forms Referenced:

[Family Well-Being Plan and Record Form (Center-based),
Family Services Referral, Family Action Plan]

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described in each one of the ChildPlus articles for documenting family Well-Being checks and Home Visits/Conferences. It must be noted in the Family Well-Being Check action notes that this was done in combination with another home visit or conference.

Documentation Standards

Document notes and follow up entries in ChildPlus as soon as possible after the encounter but no later than 36 hours after the meeting. If staff are unable to document the contact in ChildPlus, they must notify their supervisor as soon as possible.

To maintain consistency and objectivity throughout the record and throughout the program, see the **Documentation Standards** ChildPlus article to apply the appropriate documentation standards to all your updates.