Opening Entry and Closing Entry

Head Start Performance Standards

§ 1302.102 (b) (1) (i) monitoring program performance

Policy

- Opening and closing entries summaries 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.

Procedures

Opening Entry

At the beginning of the program year or when the participant enrolls in the program, the Teacher, Home Visitor or Family Service Teacher will complete the **Opening Entry Checklist** form. The Opening Entry Checklist is intended to help Teachers, Home Visitors, and Family Services Teacher learn important information about each participant and family served. These staff members are responsible for familiarizing themselves with this information for each family. This form prompts the reader to review the entire contents of each child's file and the family documentation in ChildPlus. Complete one checklist for each child prior to the Orientation/Enrollment Visit. Make sure to check the boxes and take notes when you review each piece of information.

When this review is completed, the Teacher, Home Visitor or Family Services Teacher will summarize the participant and family information in narrative form in ChildPlus. In the Family Services Module, select *Add Event* and select **Opening Entry Checklist**. Record the completion of the Opening Entry.

Note any significant concerns and strengths for the child and/or family. Information in the opening entry event note may include:

- Information about the family structure. Is this a one or two-parent family, a blended family, foster family, legal guardians, or are there grandparents who are parenting?
- Information about siblings.
- A record of educational achievement.
- Whether or not the parent(s)/guardian(s) are employed and where they work.
- Services that the family currently receives. Have the parents indicated a need for services or information in any area?
- What are the family's cultural affiliations or identifications? Does this family speak English? If not, what is their primary language and what is their country of origin?
- What kind of community support is available to this family? (Hint: How many people are listed on the **Emergency Contact Form**?)
- Does this family have access to medical and dental services and health insurance?
- Are the parent(s) under 18?

- Is the mother currently pregnant?
- Is there any other information of interest or value that might have an impact on the child's experience with Head Start/Early Head Start?
- A careful review of the *screenings* tells us if there are any major concerns for the child. Is this child receiving Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) services?
- Is the child in foster care? In the process of adoption?
- Are there transportation issues?

For returning children, please summarize the major events and highlights of the previous year. For example, did parents complete their goals? Have they changed jobs? Has the family added any additional members? Did any previous family members leave the family? Were there any significant challenges from last year, such as a utility shutoff or Notice of Eviction? Any problems on the bus? Behavior concerns? Ongoing medical problems or conditions?

See the Family Services ChildPlus Training Portal and the second page of the Opening Entry Checklist form for directions on documentation.

Closing Entry

At the end of the year or when the child leaves the program, the Teacher, Home Visitor, or Family Services Teacher will complete the **Closing Entry Checklist** form. This checklist helps to ensure that all documentation needed has been completed before the closing of the year. Please include any significant issues, concerns or strengths for the child and/or family in the Closing Entry event type. If possible, this should be the last event added to the Family Services module.

See the Family Services ChildPlus Training Portal and the third and fourth page of the Closing Entry Checklist form for directions on documentation.

Documentation Standards

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.