



Addressing Challenges, Exploring Expectations

**Janie Sailors, Robin Gadsden-Dupree
Amy Hood Hooten, and Dennis Angle**

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Chapter One

How Do Your Services to Expectant Families Stack Up?

Programs are often afraid that they are not providing services to expectant families in the right way. That is perhaps the best part of Early Head Start - **as long as you are following the Head Start Performance Standards, there is no wrong way to do things** - especially in the area of expectant families.

The Head Start Program Performance Standards that fall under Section **1304.40(c)** are the specific standards for “Services to Pregnant Women.” You may notice, however, that throughout this book we often utilize the term *Expectant Families* in place of Pregnant Women. The reason for this change in semantics is that we want to encourage all members of the family to be involved during the pregnancy!

Over the past few years, Early Head Start programs have designed various models for providing services to expectant families based on both the needs of the families and the needs of the community that the program serves. A few of the service models that have worked successfully for many Early Head Start programs are listed in the chart that begins on page 4. Each of these models uses a slightly different approach to meeting the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards

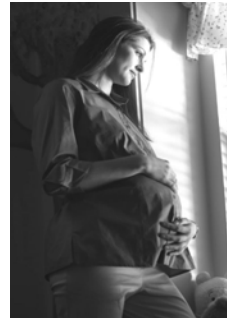
Please remember that these are only some ways that services to expectant families can be provided. In reality, the number of ways to serve expectant families is endless!



Models of Expectant Families Services

FAMILY SERVICE MODEL

The Family Service model is one in which the Family Services Staff conduct weekly home visits to the expectant family. During these visits, the Early Head Start staff provide training and information as required by the Head Start Program Performance Standards and ensure that the mother is making all prenatal health appointments.



HEALTH SERVICE MODEL

This model is set up in such a manner that a Health Service staff member or a program nurse conducts visits to the expectant families. The staff member ensures the Head Start Program Performance Standards are being met.

COLLABORATIVE MODEL

The collaborative model is one in which the Early Head Start program collaborates or contracts with another agency or program that is already providing services to pregnant women. For instance, some health departments, high schools, or Healthy Start programs provide services to pregnant women. The Early Head Start program collaborates with these agencies to provide other services and to ensure the Head Start Program Performance Standards are met.



MENTOR MODEL

Some organizations such as Child Abuse prevention, women's clubs, and Big Brother and Sisters organizations can work with the Early Head Start program to provide services to expectant families as required by the Performance Standards. Individuals from these organizations can serve as mentors to the pregnant woman and her family.

SUPPORT GROUP MODEL

Some Early Head Start programs may choose the support group model based on the needs of the clientele served by the program. Some of the pregnant women may be full time students or may have to work and the models mentioned previously may not fit their needs. A support group is formed and all the pregnant women are brought together for training and education on a schedule that is convenient to the group's members. An Early Head Start staff is assigned to work with the group to meet individual needs.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT MODEL

The child development model is designed to allow classroom teachers to work with the pregnant women and their families. The teacher ensures the Head Start Program Performance Standards are followed. This model allows the teacher to build a bond with the expectant families prior to the child entering the centers.



In order to ensure that your program is providing services to expectant families in the most appropriate way and that you are meeting the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards, every program first needs to have a written plan outlining the prenatal program options. In order to determine the most appropriate content for the written plan, the program will need to have an up-to-date community assessment. The community assessment will help direct the program to determine whether or not there are agencies in the community that Early Head Start programs may collaborate with. It will also help determine whether you provide home visits to expectant families, or if you work with the local high schools. Let the Community Assessment drive your expectant family services. If you need more information regarding the community assessment process, see the Head Start Program Performance Standards **1304.51(a)(1)**.

After you determine the program option for expectant families, you will need to document your methods in a written plan. The Head Start Performance Standards **1304.51(a)(1)(iii)** states that written plans for implementing services in each of the program areas be developed. The following Work Plan Outline can be used as you complete your written work plan, policies, and procedures for ensuring all standards are met.