

EHS Home Base Program Option

The **key focus** of the Early Head Start Home Base program option includes:

1. Health & Safety
2. Mental Health
3. Nutrition
4. Education
5. Special Education
6. Parent Involvement
7. Social Services

The Home Base option offers and supports comprehensive services to children and their families through weekly home visits and group socialization experiences. Each home visit will focus on the parent as the child's most important relationship and first teacher. Through parent input, focus is also placed on the needs of the child. Child development experiences, which include the relationships and interactions between parent and child, should occur during each home visit and group socialization. Comprehensive, high quality home visitation services strengthen and support families so that they, in turn can provide the best possible support for their child.

Home Visits

The Home Base Option requires the Early Head Start Educator (EHSE) to visit a maximum of 12 families every week for a minimum of one and a half hour. Early Head Start home visits provide comprehensive services to support and strengthen the relationships between infants, toddlers and their parents.

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 Early Head Start Educator works with parents to help them provide routines and experiences that enhance their child's growth and development.

Home visits must be conducted by a trained Early Head Start Educator with the content of the visit jointly planned by the Early Head Start Educator and Early Head Start parents. The Early Head Start Educator conducts the home visit with the participation of parents or the child's primary legal guardians, in the family home. The home visits may not be conducted with childcare providers and other temporary caregivers. The Early Head Start Educators, over the course of a month, focus on all the Early Head Start program components, make referrals and provide additional support to families experiencing multiple or sustained stresses.

Group Socialization

The Home Base option provides an opportunity for group socialization two times per month, either in a Head Start classroom, home, in a community facility or on a field trip. The purpose of these socialization activities for the children is to emphasize peer group interaction. The length of each socialization experience is based on the developmental level of the child, the content of the socialization experience, and other child and family needs. The children are to be supervised by their own parents through observation and active participation. The Early Head Start Educator assists in the supervision and observation of the socialization experience.

Prenatal Services

The home visiting curriculum adopted by the Early Head Start for expectant families' sets forth topics to be discussed and promotes individualization of choice of topics to the needs of each family.

The length and frequency of the home visits for pregnant women are based on the family's needs and goals. The Early Head Start Educator assists the pregnant women, enrolled in the program, in accessing comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care through referrals, as soon as they enroll into the program.

Pregnant women are also encouraged to attend socializations and are provided with opportunities to interact with other women in various stages of pregnancy, new parents, and more experienced parents. Pregnant moms also become familiar with the home visits, socialization experiences and routines.

