

Head Start/Early Head Start Policies and Procedures

Dental Health

Procedure

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1. Family Service Worker (FSW) and Home Based (HB) staff will inform the parent/guardian of Head Start dental requirements at enrollment and, if needed, will link the parent/guardian to dental care resources.
2. The FSW and HB staff will discuss with the parent/guardian the importance of participating in their child's dental care, including making appointments, asking questions, discussing preventive measures, providing educational material, and completing a dental reminder letter.
3. It is the responsibility of the FSW and HB staff to follow up on a missing dental and document in the child's digital record (ChildPlus) in the Health Contact Notes of the Health module.
4. If after 90 days from the child's enrollment date and staff are unable to obtain the enrollment dental examination, the child must be referred to the designated Health/Nutrition Specialist. Staff must include all dates they have spoken/contacted the parent regarding the missing dental examination in ChildPlus Health Contact notes of Health Module, and Parent Release form with the referral. (For FSW only: a parent release form must be uploaded in ChildPlus). The designated Health Nutrition Specialist can send a letter to the parent and/or eFax the dentist to obtain most recent record.

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For children who have no dental insurance:

The FSW and HB staff will complete a Sacramento Covered referral for every child who does not have a dental home.

NOTE: Please refer to the “Obtaining a Medical/Dental Home” policy and procedure.

Head Start funds may be used for professional dental services when no other source of funding is available. When Head Start funds are used for such services, all efforts to access other available sources should be made and documented. A request can be made through a referral to the designated Health/Nutrition Specialist. The referral must have the supporting documents needed, including all efforts to access other available sources of funding, and the Request for Dental Services Form. Please refer to the Dental Referrals for the Uninsured & Underinsured policy and procedure.

For Failed Dentals

1. It is the responsibility of the FSW and HB staff to follow up on a failed dental.

FSWs will document follow-up in the child’s ChildPlus record in the failed dental health event in the Health module. See Guidance for ChildPlus Health Event Status Codes, section V for guidance. It is recommended that FSWs monitor data for failed health events monthly by generating a 3065 health report from ChildPlus.

HB will document the follow-up in the Failed Health Event Follow-Up form and submit it to the designated Health/Nutrition Specialist. They will document your efforts in ChildPlus. This will be triggered by a 3065 report that the designated Health/Nutrition Specialist provides monthly to HB staff.

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Both FSW and HB staff can use huddle time with their designated Health/Nutrition Specialist to ask questions or request support/training in the ChildPlus system.

2. If a parent/guardian refuses to obtain dental care for their child who failed the dental exam, the FSW and HB staff must complete a referral (on an Internal Request for Follow-up Services form) and submit it to the designated Health/Nutrition Specialist.
 - a. Children with non-urgent dental exams typically begin treatment process at a later time, and sometimes as late as two months after the failed exam date. If the parent cannot comply with this timeline, the referral process should begin.
 - b. Children with urgent dental exams should begin the treatment process within one month of the failed exam date. If the parent cannot comply with this timeline, the referral process should begin.

NOTE: Urgent care is defined as pain, deep cavities, abscess, broken tooth, or exposed root.