

Program Performance Standards

Below are some of the Head Start Program Performance Standards that require support for children's social and emotional development and guiding behavior. The accompanying rationale statements explain the importance of each Program Performance Standard listed.

For All Children Birth to Five

1304.21(a)(3)(i) Child development and education approach for all children. Grantee and delegate agencies must support social and emotional development by encouraging development which enhances each child's strength by:

(C) *Encouraging self-control by setting clear, consistent limits, and having realistic expectations.*

Rationale: Self-control is one element of social and emotional development that enables children to form friendships, to communicate effectively, to use others as resources for problem solving, and to gain social competence.

(D) *Encouraging respect for the feelings and rights of others.*

Rationale: Children who are encouraged to respect the feelings and rights of others engage in positive relationships that build social competence.

For Infants and Toddlers

1304.21(b) Child development and education approach for infants & toddlers.

(1) Grantee and delegate agencies' program of services for infants and toddlers must encourage (see **45 CFR 1304.3(a)(5)** for a definition of curriculum):

(i) The development of secure relationships in out-of-home care settings for infants and toddlers by having a limited number of consistent teachers over an extended period of time. Teachers must demonstrate an understanding of the child's family culture and, whenever possible, speak the child's language (see 45 CFR 1304.52(g)(2)).

Rationale: To support the development of infants and toddlers, the curriculum focuses on relationships, respect, and responsiveness of the child development services. Social and emotional development of infants and toddlers is based upon their relationship with their caregivers. For healthy social and emotional development, infants and toddlers need the attention of consistent caregiving. Staff who understand the child's family culture and speak the home language reinforce an infant's or toddler's emotional security and trust. A safe and secure environment nurtures positive relationships with peers and adults.

(ii) Trust and emotional security so that each child can explore the environment according to his or her developmental level.

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Rationale: *Children's feelings of security and attachment influence all aspects of development, including the curiosity and confidence necessary to explore the environment.*

(2) Grantee and delegate agencies must support the social and emotional development of infants and toddlers by promoting an environment that:

- (i) ***Encourages the development of self-awareness, autonomy, and self-expression.***

Rationale: *The social and emotional growth of infants and toddlers develops through their relationships with caregivers. A safe and secure environment nurtures positive relationships with peers and adults.*

For Preschoolers

1304.21(a)(3) Child development and education approach for all children.
Grantee and delegate agencies must support social and emotional development by:

- (ii) ***Planning for routines and transitions so that they occur in a timely, predictable and unrushed manner according to each child's needs.***

Rationale: *Predictable, daily schedules incorporate routines that support emotional stability in children; and transition activities throughout the day can be used as learning opportunities to facilitate various changes.*

1304.21(c)(1) Child development and education approach for preschoolers.
Grantee and delegate agencies, in collaboration with the parents, must implement a curriculum (see **45 CFR 1304.3(a)(5)**) that:

- (iv) ***Ensures that the program environment helps children develop emotional security and facility in social relationships.***

Rationale: *Emotional security forms the base from which children increase their confidence, initiative, and ability to develop positive social relationships.*

- (v) ***Enhances each child's understanding of self as an individual and as a member of a group.***

Rationale: *The curriculum supports the individuality of children, strengthens their self-confidence, assists them in recognizing themselves as individuals, and increases their skills in relating to others.*

- (vi) ***Provides each child with opportunities for success to help develop feelings of competence, self-esteem, and positive attitudes toward learning***



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Rationale: *The implementation of the curriculum provides opportunities for each child to succeed, feel confident in his or her abilities, and develop positive attitudes toward learning.*

1304.24(a)(3) Child mental health. Mental health program services must include a regular schedule of on-site mental health consultation involving the mental health professional, program staff, and parents on how to:

- (i) ***Design and implement program practices responsive to the identified behavioral and mental health concerns of an individual child or group of children.***

Rationale: *Regularly scheduled mental health services help to ensure that day-to-day program practices promote mental health.*