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**Subject : Unexcused Absences**

**Source: This policy complies with Head Start Performance Standard 1305.8(a)-(c) and 1306.32(b)(5)**

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**Policy**

To give children the best possible education by requiring regular attendance to insure a consistent classroom experience. Our goal is to ensure continuity of care as well as the best early childhood education possible. When a child is consistently tardy or absent, he/she not only miss out on activities, but their routine is not consistent.

**Procedure**

1. Federal Performance Standards requires that Head Start programs must analyze the causes of absenteeism when the monthly average daily attendance rate falls below 85%. This analysis must include a study of the pattern of absences for each child, including the reasons for absences as well as the number of absences that occur on consecutive days.
2. A child is considered tardy at 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. (pick-up time).
3. Five tardies are equivalent to 1 unexcused absence.
4. When a child's attendance exceeds the monthly Average Daily Attendance (85%), then the Social Services/Parent Involvement Manager (SSPI) will contact the family by home visits or other direct contact with the child's parents.
5. If, however, the absences result from other factors including temporary family problems that affect a child's regular attendance, the EHS team will make every possible effort to work with the family in order for the children to return to the center. Our desire is to keep all children in the program if possible.
6. In circumstances where chronic absenteeism persists and it does not seem feasible to include the child in either the same or a different program option, the child's slot must be considered an enrollment vacancy.

