**MISSISSIPPI COUNTY, ARKANSAS, E.O.C.**

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

*1304.40 (g); 1304.40 (g) (1); 1304.40 (g) (i-ii); 1304.40 (g) (2); 1304.41 (a) (2)*

**PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY ADVOCACY**

**POLICY**:

The program supports and encourages parent involvement in community advocacy.

**PROCEDURES:**

**1.0 The Role of Advocacy**

1.1 Grantee-funded Head Start/Early Head Start programs assist low-income families in linking them with local resources and community services to meet the needs identified on the *Family Partnership Agreement Form*, *Case Notes*, *Parent Interest Questionnaire Form*, and other assessment instruments.

1.2 Head Start/Early Head Start Program staff act as advocates in the process of working with or on behalf of families to obtain services and resources that would not otherwise be provided and to resolve issues for families in need.

1.3 Head Start/Early Head Start Programs act as the spokespeople for low-income to moderate-income families to various local agencies and social service organizations regarding needs and goals to assist them toward self-sufficiency.

1.4 The Policy Council and Policy Committees serve as alternate advocate resources for parent-related issues.

1.5 Parents are assisted by Head Start Programs in working with neighborhood and community groups to call attention to the inadequacies of services for low-income families.

**2.0 Parent Involvement in Community Advocacy**

2.1 The program supports and encourages parents to influence the character and goals of community services in order to make them more responsive to their interests and needs.

2.2 The program provides families with comprehensive information about community resources, such as:

1. Health care providers, clinics, physicians, dentists and other health professionals
2. Mental health providers
3. Nutrition service providers
4. Individuals and agencies that provide services to children with disabilities and their families
5. Family preservation and support services
6. Child protective services and any other agency to which child abuse must be reported under State law
7. Local elementary schools and other educational and cultural institutions, such as libraries and museums, for both children and families
8. Any other organizations or businesses that may provide support and resources to families.

2.3 The program provides parents with opportunities to work together and with other community members, such as with:

1. Parent Committees (program level and Grantee level)
2. Policy Committee (program level)
3. Policy Council (Grantee level)
4. Program-sponsored parent/community activities

2.4 In addition, the program’s services and resources include assistance or referral for community leadership opportunities, and/or for developing their leadership capacities.