



Touchpoints Staff Training and Professional Development: Contributing To Head Start Performance Standards

FACT SHEET

Brazelton Touchpoints Center (BTC), founded by T. Berry Brazelton and his colleagues in 1996, seeks to encourage multidisciplinary practitioners to focus on the importance of establishing collaborative relationships between parents and providers. BTC provides training in developmental understanding and communication skills designed to enhance practitioners' interactions with families.

Beginning in 1998, BTC honored the unique context and contribution of the early child care and education (ECCE) setting by establishing a working group of experts in the field of ECCE, and embarked upon an initiative to adapt the Touchpoints Approach, originally designed primarily for health care providers, to ECCE. Since that time, the Touchpoints National Network has additionally contributed the expertise of numerous providers involved with Head Start/Early Head Start to the work of the ECCE Initiative. The goal of the ECCE Initiative was to influence a paradigm shift away from providing care to children within the system of the ECCE provider or setting, towards one in which child care providers join parents in that family system of care for their children. Focus groups, delivery of training in many diverse settings with ensuing modifications, and feedback from parents and providers have guided the development of the Touchpoints ECCE Initiative. To date, more than 2000 ECCE providers within 38 sites have received training in the Touchpoints Approach.

What are the benefits of Touchpoints training to Head Start/Early Head Start programs?

Touchpoints training offers Head Start and Early Head Start providers an opportunity to build on their knowledge of child development and develop more collaborative, interactive, and strength-based relationships with families.

Touchpoints training offers providers strategies to engage culturally-diverse families in services that support stronger family relationships and child outcomes. Touchpoints strategies assist providers in building upon and enhancing parental strengths and competence, by honoring parental knowledge of their children and the contribution that parents make at every stage of their children's development and education. By valuing parents' values, opinions, and observations, providers support parental mastery and the parent-child relationship, thus supporting better child development and education outcomes.

Touchpoints' Guiding Principles can assist providers in implementing Head Start Performance Standards.



Which Performance Standards does Touchpoints training impact?

Education & Early Childhood Development

- **1304.21 (a)(2)(i)**
Parents must be invited to become integrally involved in the development of the program's curriculum and approach to child development and education
- **1304.21 (a)(2)(ii)**
Parents must be provided opportunities to increase their child observation skills and to share assessments with staff that will help plan the learning experiences
- **1304.21 (a)(2)(iii)**
Parents must be encouraged to participate in staff-parent conferences and home visits to discuss their child's development and education
- **1304.21 (a)(3)(i)(E)**
Supporting and respecting the home language, culture and family composition of each child in ways that support the child's health and well-being
- **1304.21 (c)(2)**
Staff must use a variety of strategies to promote and support children's learning and developmental progress based on the observations and ongoing assessment of each child

Child Mental Health

- **1304.24 (a)(1)(i)**
Grantee and delegate agencies must work collaboratively with parents related to parent education by soliciting parental information, observations, and concerns about their child's mental health
- **1304.24 (a)(1)(ii)**
Sharing staff observations of their child and discussing and anticipating with parents their child's behavior and development, including separation and attachment issues
- **1304.24 (a)(1)(iii)**
Discussing and identifying with parents appropriate responses to their child's behaviors
- **1304.24 (a)(1)(iv)**
Discussing how to strengthen nurturing, supportive environments and relationships in the home and at the program



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Family Partnerships

- **1304.40 (a)(1)**
Grantee and delegate agencies must engage in a process of collaborative partnership-building with parents to establish mutual trust and to identify family goals, strengthens, and necessary services and other supports
- **1304.40 (a)(2)**
As part of this ongoing partnership, grantee and delegate agencies must offer parents opportunities to develop and implement individualized family partnership agreements that describe family goals, responsibilities, timetables and strategies for achieving these goals as well as progress in achieving them
- **1304.40 (a)(3)**
Grantee and delegate agencies must coordinate, to the extent possible, with families and other agencies to support the accomplishment of goals in the preexisting plans
- **1304.40 (a)(4)**
A variety of opportunities must be created by grantee and delegate agencies for interaction with parents throughout the year
- **1304.40 (a)(5)**
Meetings and interactions with families must be respectful of each family's diversity and cultural and ethnic background
- **1304.40 (e)(1)**
Grantee and delegate agencies must provide opportunities to include parents in the development of the program's curriculum and approach to child development and education
- **1304.40 (e)(3)**
Grantee and delegate agencies must provide opportunities for parents to enhance their parenting skills, knowledge and understanding of the educational and developmental needs and activities of their children with program staff
- **1304.40(h)(3)(ii)**
Assist parents to communicate with teachers and other school personnel so that parents can participate in decisions related to their children's education

Parent Involvement

- **1308.21(a)(1)**
Support parents of children with disabilities entering from infant/toddler programs



Parent Involvement *(continued)*

- **1308.21(a)(2)**

Provide information to parents on how to foster the development of their child with disabilities

- **1308.21(a)(3)**

Provide opportunities for parents to observe large group, small group and individual activities described in their child's IEP

- **1308.21(a)(4)**

Provide follow-up assistance and activities to reinforce program activities at home

- **1308.21(a)(8)**

Identify needs (caused by the disability) of siblings and other family members

- **1308.21(a)(10)**

Build parent confidence skills and knowledge in accessing resources and advocating to meet the special needs of their children

- **1308.21(b)**

Grantees must plan to assist parents in the transition of children from Head Start to public school or other placement, beginning early in the program year

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