

Postpartum Depression Screening

Policy: Postpartum Depression Screenings will be offered to all enrolled pregnant mothers and mothers of children 12 months old and younger, following the identified schedule. Screenings will be used to help identify possible health, safety, and well-being needs for the family and offer support and referrals as needed.

Procedure:

- Staff will use the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) screening tool to help detect depression, not diagnose postpartum mood disorders.
- Staff will use the screening results to help identify possible health, safety or well-being needs and offer support and referrals to community services.
- Each parent will receive information regarding postpartum depression when completing the first screening.
- Other primary caregivers in the home will be offered the screening at the same time as the biological mother.
- Staff will offer the enrolled pregnant mothers the EPDS screening once per trimester of her pregnancy.
- Health staff will administer, score, and discuss the screening with parents during the newborn visit that is scheduled within two weeks of birth.
- Upon a child's enrollment into the program, the EHS Lead Educator offer, administer, and document the screenings when the child is 2 months, 6 months, and 12 months.
- If the Early Head Start child is in out-of-home placement, but the biological parent(s) has contact with staff, the biological parent will be offered the screening according to the schedule above.
- If the enrolled pregnant mother has an unsuccessful delivery, and continues with transition services, the Health staff will administer, score, and discuss the screening with parents within two weeks.
- The Early Head Start Program Manager will review and process all screenings. Any screening outside the normal limits will be marked for follow up.
- The Disabilities and Mental Health Manager will follow up with families that have an elevated score.
- If the EHS Lead Educator feels the safety of the children and/or parent is in jeopardy, emergency medical attention will be sought immediately.
- Parents will be asked to sign a *Consent for the Release of Confidential Information* to allow Early Head Start to share results of screenings with his/her primary care provider. If the family is involved with a public health nurse, social worker, or mental health worker, staff will ask parents to add those service providers to the *Consent for the Release of Confidential Information* form. Results of screenings will then be shared with the listed professionals as deemed necessary to encourage support and services from current providers.
- All screenings offered and the results will be kept in the enrollee's electronic file.
- Staff will complete and document all referrals and follow up.

This policy complies with Head Start Performance Standard 45 CFR 1302.80 (c) - (d) and 1302.81 (a).
Policy Council Approved: April 22, 2008. Revisions Approved: 9-21-2010, 2-10-16, 4-4-18 and 8-7-19.