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To: Head Start, Early Head Start Programs/Site Directors
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From: Madeline Cancel-Hanieh *Proct.*
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Subject: HOME VISITS

An invaluable component of building a respectful relationship with parents, addressing their needs and the development of their child are the Home Visits teachers are required to make each program year.

Along with fostering a closer relationship with the parent, Home Visits help us achieve a broader understanding of each child in our program. They support opportunities for teachers and other staff to discuss with parents the advantages that Home Visits provide for both parents and children, such as:

- Making connections between the home and program settings
- Learning more about parent-child interactions
- Developing positive relationships, which allow parents and staff to get to know one another
- Identifying learning opportunities in home environments

Head Start requires that teachers make two (2) visits to the home of each child per program year. This is in addition to the two (2) staff-parent conferences required under CFR 1304.40(e)(5).

Any additional home visits are coordinated to support the partnership between family and program staff.

Other Considerations:

- Programs should document instances when parents expressly forbid home visits and in such cases, staff should continue to work on building a trusting relationship.
- Demonstrating flexibility in scheduling home visits and sensitivity to a parent's cultural preferences is an important consideration for working parents.
- If a visit to a child's home is not an option, parents and teachers may mutually agree to meet at an alternative location under certain circumstances (i.e. safety concerns).

The following guidance and resources regarding Home Visits may be found online at: www.childserviceschicago.com.

Resources for Home Visits

- *Training Guide for the Head Start Learning Community: Supporting Family Learning* Module 3 – Home Visits Activity 3-3 & Activity 3-4 with handouts

Information regarding Home Visits is also available in the following journals:

Young Children (Vol. 53, pp. 71-78) – Gorter-Reu, M.S., & Anderson, G.M.
“Home Visits and More.”

Young Children (Vol. 49, pp. 62-68) – Johnston, L. & Mermin, J. , “Easing Children’s entry to School: Home Visits help.”

Principal (Vol. 73, pp 49-50) – Home Visits: A New Twist On An Old-Fashion Idea.