

NCKSEC Interlocal #636  
Parents As Teachers  
Parent Educator Handbook

Board Approved

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**VISION**

All children will learn, grow and develop  
to realize their full potential.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

To provide the information, support and encouragement  
parents need to help their children develop optimally  
during the crucial early years of life.

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## **PURPOSE:**

**This handbook was prepared to guide Parent Educators in the Interlocal #636 Parents As Teachers program.** This is merely an attempt to delineate a process to be used by the parent educators. Remember that you are a professional employee of Interlocal #636 providing services through the Parents As Teachers program.

- Each family is offered a minimum of six personal visits throughout the year. The calendar year for the program is from July 1 – June 30.
- Although the program allows parent educators some flexibility, parent educators are responsible for trying to accommodate parents and family routines as much as possible when scheduling visits. When possible home visits should be scheduled when both parents can be present.
- Sharing developmental information is the focus of each visit. Parent educators share information that is based on sound educational research.
- As a professional courtesy, parent educators will notify families scheduled for visits when the parent educator will be late arriving for visits.
- Visits for families who enroll late may be prorated. Each family should receive a personal visit every six to eight weeks. A sample guide to use in scheduling visits is as follows:
 

July – August	six visits
September – October	five visits
November – December	four visits
January – February	three visits
March – April	two visits
May – June	one visit
- If you are serving families you feel need to be seen more frequently than the prescribed number of visits, parent educators may increase visits.
- Personal visits should last approximately one hour for one child, one and one half hours for two children.
- Personal Visit Records (PVR's) are to be completed on each child visited by the parent educator in a timely fashion. Specific, concise, objective reports are crucial documentation to the family and success of our program.
- Family and child data is the responsibility of the parent educator. Parent educators are encouraged to update information as often as change occurs.
- Clean all washable activity items taken on personal visits with Clorox water or wipes after each visit to fight the spread of germs and/or communicable diseases.

- If a parent educator has to cancel a visit it is the parent educator's responsibility to reschedule.
- If a parent cancels a visit, the parent educator is encouraged to reschedule the visit as soon as the parent educator's schedule allows.
- If the school district in which the family resides and/or the school district the parent educator lives in cancels school or activities due to inclement weather, personal visits are canceled and rescheduled when the parent educator's schedule allows.

### **Repeated No Shows and Cancellations**

- Parent educators are encouraged to be persistent about seeing families.
- If a family has repeatedly missed appointments, it is the parent educator's responsibility to contact the family to determine future program participation.

### **Professional Conduct**

- Parent educators are encouraged to dress professionally for all activities in the program.
- It is strongly encouraged to carry your cell phone in your pocket during a home visit. However, the personal use of cell phones is inappropriate. All phones should be placed in the "silent mode" during visits and calls should not be returned until the visit has been completed. The only acceptable time the phone should be used during a visit is in the case of an emergency or if the parent educator is in danger.

## **SUSPECTED ABUSE/NEGLECT POLICY**

- Refer to Interlocal #636 Policy and Procedures.

## **SCREENINGS**

- The following screenings/checklists are to be completed on children six months and older. Screenings will be done on a yearly basis.
  - Vision – after the age of six months.
  - Hearing – after the age of six months.
  - Health Record – updated annually or as information is provided.
  - Dental – updated on Health Record
  - Denver II – done on a yearly basis
- Additional screenings may be done at any time the parent educator deems necessary, if screening shows concerns.
- Referrals should be recorded on PVR's. Parental consent will be given before referrals are made.

## **ANNUAL GROUP MEETINGS**

- Parent educators will assume responsibilities for parent group meetings held in the districts they serve. Group meetings will last approximately one hour.
- Responsibilities when in charge of a group meeting include:
  1. Reserving the space for the group meeting.
  2. Set up and clean up of the room used.
  3. Filling out necessary forms and paperwork.
  4. Contact speaker, if having one.
  5. Gather materials needed and make any needed copies.
  6. Arrange for door prizes.
  7. Publicity of the group meetings.
- Parent participation in group meetings will be recorded in each families personal file.
- Group meeting records are to be stored in the main file cabinet and are to be completed by the parent educator in charge of the meeting. They are to be completed in a timely fashion.

- Parent educators will maintain up-to-date records and folders on each family enrolled in the program. These records will be available for periodic peer review.
- Only specific, objective and concise developmental observations are recorded in the family lesson plans.
- Information in the family folder includes enrollment/exit forms, summary of services, health records, lesson plans, screenings, and results.
- Visit reports should be completed in a timely manner.
- Parent educators are responsible for maintaining a full caseload.
- Confidentiality will be maintained.

### **Families Exiting**

- When a child exits the program because he or she is turning three, an exit form will be completed. The exit report will be included in the file.
- If the family exits the program for other reasons, such as moving, lack of interest, etc. and has been seen at least once then an exit form should be completed.

### **Family Lists/Mailing List**

- In order to keep accurate information on families, the parent educator needs to keep family information up to date, i.e. new babies, telephone numbers, address changes.
- Each Parent Educator will submit a current family list and waiting list of each district by September 1 to Program Supervisor. A revised update list will be submitted by March 1.

- Maintaining confidential information is an extremely high priority in the Parents As Teachers program and in the Districts served.
- Parent educators have access to family records and other information that is considered confidential.
- Parent educators will safeguard this information when in use, filing it properly when not being used, and discussing it only with those who have a legitimate need to know.

## **NEWSLETTERS**

- Newsletters will include information on:
  1. General Child development
  2. Parenting tips
  3. Health and Safety information
  4. Parent/Child activities
- Parent Educators compile and send monthly newsletters to:
  1. Families enrolled in PAT.
  2. Identified families with children birth to age 3 in participating districts.
  3. District Superintendents and State Legislators.
  4. Area health providers, extension offices, libraries, and other collaborating agencies.
- Newsletters are to be sent by bulk mail to arrive at the first of each month.

## **REPORTS**

- The Mid-Year/End-of-Year reports are to be completed and sent to the State PAT Office by the due date. Program Supervisor will be responsible for submitting these reports.
- The annual Individual Education Report is the responsibility of each parent educator.

## **OFFICE TIME**

- Parent educators will collaborate to schedule meeting dates at Interlocal #636 office. Staff meetings will be held as needed.
- Time sheets and mileage forms and expenditure reimbursement forms are to be completed monthly and given to the secretary by the last day of the month or as otherwise specified.
- Requests for purchases are to be made and approved by the supervisor in advance. Expenditures must be turned in on a request for materials form and approved prior to reimbursement.
- Sick days and personal days are to be reported using Interlocal #636 procedures.
- Parent Educators are to follow Master Certification Policy contract.

## **PROGRAM GOALS**

- Increase parent knowledge of early childhood development and improve parenting practices
- Provide early detection of developmental delays and health issues
- Prevent child abuse and neglect
- Increase children's school readiness and school success

## **CORE VALUES**

- The early years of a child's life are critical for optimal development and provide the foundation for success in school and in life.
- Parents are their children's first and most influential teachers.
- Established and emerging research should be the foundation of parent education and family support curricula, training, materials and services.
- All young children and their families deserve the same opportunities to succeed, regardless of any demographic, geographic or economic considerations.
- An understanding and appreciation of the history and traditions of diverse cultures is essential in serving families.

The following guidelines should be reviewed and followed by Interlocal #636 PAT employees when making a home visit. Supervisors of employees who make home visits are responsible for sharing these guidelines.

### **Preview the Neighborhood**

If unfamiliar with a particular area, preview the neighborhood before making a home visit. After locating the address, there are a number of possibilities:

- You feel comfortable in the neighborhood and the home visit may be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time.
- You decide that you are uncomfortable with going to a particular location, so you meet on school property or in a public setting.
- You decide that the appropriate time to visit would be during daylight hours only.

### **Prepare Before Leaving**

- Dress professionally. Use reasonable judgment about jewelry and accessories.
- Before leaving for a visit, put valuables in trunk.
- Always leave one hand free to carry your car key.
- Call ahead of time to remind family that you are on your way. When appropriate, ask them to suggest the best place to park.
- Carry your cell phone.
- Leave your itinerary for co-workers or your family to note. Tell co-workers or family about possible changes of plans. If making an evening or weekend visit, notify a friend or family member of your plans.
- Discuss any concerns with supervisor and arrange a plan to address concerns.
- Be prepared for the weather and consider driving conditions.
- When the school district cancels classes or evening activities all PAT activities may also be cancelled including personal visits and group meetings.

### **Be Alert During the Home Visit**

- Be alert to the people in the neighborhood, the building, and the home. Do not enter a building whose entrance is blocked by

- people or objects. Do not enter a building or home where people are engaged in illegal activities.
- Locate entrances, exits, and phones.
  - After knocking/ringing bell wait for an adult to open the door and offer access.
  - Be cautious when approaching animals within the home setting. Animals may be territorial and protective. If necessary, ask a family member to confine the animal while you are on your visit.
  - Use universal precautions always being aware of blood borne pathogens.
  - If you detect a noxious or suspicious odor leave the premises and notify your supervisor immediately.
  - Any situation that causes a well-trained home visitor to feel uncomfortable or fearful can be grounds for discontinuing a home visit.
  - If you are asked to leave the premises to do so immediately.
  - If it makes you feel safer as you leave, ask a family member to observe until you drive off.
  - Call 911 if in danger or an emergency medical situation arises. Never attempt to take care of situations on your own!
  - Park your car in a well-lit area of the street or parking lot. Park on the street or in a parking space where your car cannot be blocked in the space.