

6a. Home-Based Socializations

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Socializations are planned opportunities for enrolled infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and their parents or primary caregivers, and prenatal parents are invited to learn together. These experiences support parent–child relationships, child development, and family well-being.

Socializations are a required part of the Home-Based Option. They align with the **Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS)**, program School Readiness Goals, and relationship-based practices. The program ensures all events are safe, inclusive, culturally responsive, and accessible to every family.

2. Purpose

The goals of Socialization are to:

- **Support** parents as their child's first and most important teacher.
- **Promote** healthy and responsive parent–child relationships.
- **Provide** safe spaces for children to explore and learn in a group setting.
- **Foster** peer connections and support networks among families.
- **Model** activities that match a child's age and stage of development.
- **Connect** families to community resources and helpful services.

3. Definitions

- **Socialization:** A planned group or individual activity for children and parents that supports learning and growth.
- **Group Socialization:** An experience involving multiple families together.

4. Procedures

4.1 Planning and Scheduling

1. **Frequency:** Early Head Start will offer at least 22 socializations per program year, including during the summer. Head Start Home-Based option will offer at least 16 socializations per program year.
2. **Accessibility:** We choose times and locations based on family needs, physical accessibility, and transportation options.
3. **Communication:** Families will receive advance notice of dates, times, locations, and planned activities via their preferred communication method.
4. **Settings:** Events may be held at our center or as community field trips.
5. **Lesson Planning:** Plan and provide age-appropriate activities that align with the [Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework \(ELOF\)](https://www.headstart.gov/inter) ([headstart.gov/inter](https://www.headstart.gov/inter))

[active-head-start-early-learning-outcomes-framework-ages-birth-five](#)) and the home-based curriculum.

- a. Include parents in planning activities and experiences that meet their child's developmental needs and interests.
- b. Plan activities that will encourage parents to share experiences related to their child's development with other parents to strengthen parent-child relationships and help promote parent understanding of child development.

4.2 Participation

1. **Expectation:** Families are encouraged to attend the scheduled socializations each month.
2. **Integration:** Socializations support—but do not replace—weekly home visits.
3. **Tracking:** Staff record participation for each child, which is reviewed regularly by supervisors.

4.3 Staffing and Environment

1. **Expertise:** Qualified staff who understand infant, toddler, and preschool development facilitate every session.
2. **Safety:** We maintain a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate classroom environment for infants and toddler or preschoolers, grounded in consistent safety practices, parent support and a commitment to each child's well-being. Our space is designed to support exploration while protecting children
3. **Materials:** All toys and tools are clean, safe, and reflect diverse cultures and languages.
4. **Learning:** Activities cover all areas of development, including social-emotional, language, and physical health.

4.4 Inclusion and Individualization

1. **Disability Support:** Socializations are fully inclusive of children with disabilities or special health care needs.
2. **Accommodations:** We adapt activities and environments to ensure every child and family can participate fully.
3. **Goal Alignment:** We include School Readiness Goals, Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), Individual Education Plan (IEP) outcomes and family input in planning.

4.5 Health, Nutrition, and Documentation

1. **Safety Standards:** We follow all sanitation, hygiene and emergency procedures during events.
2. **Nutrition:** When possible, we provide healthy snacks and model safe feeding practices for parents.

3. **Recordkeeping:** Staff document child observations and parent engagement in the program's data system.
4. **Feedback:** We regularly collect family feedback to improve our services and meet School Readiness Goals.

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