



## HEAD START PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS SUPPORT CHILDREN'S INTERESTS

### PART 1302 PROGRAM OPERATIONS

- Subpart C – Education and Child Development Program Services
- **1302.35(a) Purpose.** A home-based program must provide home visits and group socialization activities that promote secure parent-child relationships and help parents provide high-quality early learning experiences in language, literacy, mathematics, social and emotional functioning, approaches to learning, science, physical skills, and creative arts. A program must implement a research-based curriculum that delivers developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate home visits and group socialization activities that support children's cognitive, social, and emotional growth for later success in school.
- **(c) Home visit experiences.** A program that operates the home-based option must ensure all home visits focus on promoting high-quality early learning experiences in the home and growth towards the goals described in the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five...*

### MAKING THE CONNECTION TO THE EARLY LEARNING OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK (ELOF)

Build on children's interests to support children's learning and development across the ELOF domains.

- **Approaches to Learning**
  - **Curiosity and initiative.** When children are interested in certain objects, materials, people, or events, they take the initiative to explore further.
  - **Executive functioning.** Research shows that children focus, sustain attention, and persist in actions and behaviors for longer periods of time when they are interested in the topic or task (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2018).
- **Social and Emotional Development**
  - **A sense of belonging.** When education staff incorporate children's interests, children see themselves and their interests reflected in the learning setting.
- **Language and Literacy**
  - **Communication of cognitive skills.** When children are interested in a topic or a task, they are motivated to describe and share their ideas and thoughts. For example, when children are interested in pets, they are likely to want to talk about them, read about them, compare them, draw them, and write about them. These experiences provide opportunities to build foundational skills in language, literacy, and cognitive skills.

Implementing a curriculum responsively requires home visitors to work with families to learn children's interests. It also requires that home visitors have a deep understanding of their curriculum resources. With this information, they can support families as they use the home as a learning environment and implement engaging learning experiences and interactions that build on children's interests.