

Partnering with Part C Providers

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Narrator: Early intervention services make a big difference for infants and toddlers with delays or disabilities. Early Head Start programs that facilitate referrals, support families, work with special educators and service providers, and develop strong partnerships with local Part C agencies, pave the way for children to receive needed interventions.

Part C providers offer early intervention services to help infants and toddlers and their families meet the goals in their Individualized Family Service Plan. Early Head Start educators and Part C providers can partner to maximize progress toward these goals.

Anna Wanzer: When Part C providers and Early Head Start intentionally partner together, we can provide more meaningful support for the children and families that we're working with.

Victoria Pierson: Any time you're working with a child, by definition, that child impacts the family, that family impacts the child, and everyone who works with the family or the child has an influence. Kind of making those pieces work together like a well-oiled machine and having mutual respect about what each knows about the child can make better outcomes for everybody.

Maggie Diaz: We have a lot of good resources, good professionals that really wants to help families, and now I don't feel alone. I feel like that we can do wonderful things for them.

Narrator: Early Head Start educators, Part C providers, and families can make the most progress toward the child and family's IFSP goals when they work as a team. The stronger the partnership, the more effective each team member's efforts can be.

Anna: Some things that I really appreciate about the expertise that the Early Head Start provider brings is their ability to know the whole family, to be really in touch with the family's cultural background and language – home language. And their ability to do ongoing assessment is super helpful.

Victoria: The best thing about partnering with folks who are doing Part C work is that we each can focus on different aspects of what needs to happen for that child and family.

Anna: The family is getting more time to practice because the Early Head Start visitor can see the family weekly for a longer period of time. The family is getting even more feedback about the ideas that are being tried and building their confidence and being able to problem-solve more often, and so the child is meeting their goals faster.

Maggie: This partnership benefits children by giving them opportunities to succeed and be ready for school.

Narrator: It can sometimes be tricky to build and maintain a lasting partnership. Collaboration takes consistency and intention.

Maggie: My role with Part C providers looks like willing to share all the efforts that we can do together with the family, and in turn, the child's successful.

Narrator: Let's hear from some educators and Part C providers about the strategies that work for them.

Victoria: I'm often the one who does the referral or is there when they're doing the referral. To kind of make that connection straight on – when I can, when I know who it is. Find out who the FRC is and work with them. Often email works really well for those of us who are out in the field a lot. That's my usual, and text these days sometimes work too. I will usually offer that I can overlap my home visit with their home visit for whatever period of time they might be comfortable with. Part of that is to help the parent with their schedule, because they get a lot of appointments. The reason I usually give is that it helps me and the family to know, what are the goals that they're working on? What are the strategies they're using? I can then incorporate those same strategies myself.

Anna: When families choose to have co-visits, it's beneficial to everyone, because the things that the Head Start provider and the Part C provider are working on go together a lot better, are probably more effective in the long run for the family. Another reason we might decide to do a co-visit is when we're talking about something important, like transition, when a child's getting close to turning 3. And often, the Early Head Start provider has a lot more information about how – what's out in the community, what would be a good match for the family. And they have access to the Head Start programs if that's going to be the next step for the family.

Narrator: Early Head Start and Part C providers are stronger together. Partnership between Early Head Start and Part C providers can make a world of difference for infants and toddlers and their families. An effective partnership benefits everyone involved – the child, family, and service providers – and involves sharing information, collaboration and, as children progress, celebrating their amazing accomplishments.

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