

Heading: CHILD MENTAL HEALTH	P.S.#	Revised: 8/5/04
Policy Name: Mental Health Assessment and Concerns	Policy # CMH 1	Page 1 of 1

Purpose: SUU Head Start will solicit parental information, observation and concerns about their child’s mental health. Support will be given for parental participation in any needed interventions. Services of a mental health professional will be secured to ensure timely and effective identification of a family or staff concern about a child’s mental health . Teaching staff will view behavior issues which cannot be handled by the teaching team alone, not as failure in their classroom management but as an opportunity to help the child and family receive more professional resources and support.

Mental Health Concerns

1. Parents are requested to complete the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) during the classroom orientation. The DECA, referrals, exams, parental concerns and high enrollment points will all be used for early identification of children with behavior needs and/or other high risk indicators. Teaching staff will review all records in each child’s file before the first home visit so they will be cognizant of the special needs of all children.
2. In order to give each child the most timely assistance, behavior that requires action will be handled according to the [Behavior Management Chart](#) in the Core Book, Policy # EED 1. See also the [flow chart](#) in the Core Book.
3. In urgent cases where the child’s behavior is of particular concern or that child or other children are in danger (refer also to the flow chart):
 - a. Teaching teams may begin the teacher DECA immediately.
 - b. The Coordinator will meet with the teaching team to observe the child and create/revise the Action plan as soon as possible. The Coordinator may also complete a DECA for the child.
 - c. The parent, teacher and coordinator DECA, along with the incident report(s), Action Plan(s) and coordinator observation will be brought to the Staffing committee.
 - d. Professional or Specialist observation may be requested immediately.
 - e. Support will be given to the family for any professional or specialist recommended referral or transition, agreed to by the staffing committee.
 - f. The Mental Health Assistant and Family Advocate will support families in making the transition to mental health services.
4. If families desire to be connected with mental health services the Mental Health Assistant will aid the family to complete the referral process.